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BLUE GRASS BALLADS

WILLIAM LIGHTFOOT VISSCHER



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Blue Grass Ballads and Other Verse

By William Lightfoot Visscher

Author of PETER VANSANT—HARP OF
THE SOUTH—BLACK MAMMY—
CARLISLE OF COLORADO—WAY
OUT YONDER, ETC., ETC.

H. M. CALDWELL COMPANY
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By William Lightfoot Visscher

PS
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To my dear and true friends
MR. AND MRS. W. F. HALL
of Chicago, this book is inscribed
with love and gratitude.

W. L. V.

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Blue Grass Ballads

Proem

*In the evening of a lifetime,
While the shadows, growing long,
Fall eastward, and the gloaming
Brings the spell of vesper song,
Fond memory turns backward
To the bright light of the day,
Where joys, like troops of fairies,
Gaily dance along the way,
Full-armed with mirth and music,
Driving skirmishers of care
Howling, back into the forest,
And their dark, uncanny lair.*

*So the pastures of Kentucky,
And the fields of Tennessee,
The bloom of all the Southland
And the old-time melody;
The vales, and streams, and mountains;
The bay of trailing hounds;
The neigh of blooded horses
And the farm-yard's cheery sounds;
The smiles of wholesome women
And the hail of hearty men,
Come sweeping back, in fancy,
And, behold, I'm young again.*

Blue Grass Ballads

KENTUCKY.

From where Big Sandy tumbles down
 Its sources in the mountains
Of West Virginia, and is fed
 By crystal brooks and fountains,
Until it joins the graceful sweep
 Of broad Ohio's waters,
That wash the strong and shapely feet
 Of three beloved daughters
Of fair Columbia, and join
 The great and murky river,
That sweeps old Tennessee's rich banks,
 Where water lilies quiver,
 I love you, dear Kentucky.

I love your woods and verdant hills,
 And every stream and farm-land,
For to your sons, dear mother state,
 Your every rood's a charm-land ;
No fairer women in the world,
 Nor braver men are living,
To bless the places whence they go
 Than those that you are giving,

And for your strong and loving ways,
Your happy homes and graces,
Your sons are zealous that your name
Shall hold the highest places,
And love you, dear Kentucky.

Oh, may you live ten thousand years
In all your strength and beauty,
And may your sons cling close to you
In loyal love and duty ;
And may your fields be ever fair
And all your sorrows lightest,
While all your joys shall grow apace,
The sweetest and the brightest ;
May Peace and Plenty live with you,
Through all the coming ages,
And ever pure your history be
In all its shining pages,
As our love, Kentucky.

SONGS OF LONG AGO.

List to the song of the old-time South,
Come like a ghost tonight,
'Rayed in the bloom of the dear loved land,
And in a gown of white.

A belle of the old-time strikes the keys,
And melody is here,

Clad in the songs of the dear old days,
Remembered with a tear.

The days when men were gallant and true,
In court and field and hall,
When word of a friend was word of a host,
And truth was all in all.

Dance, in the gray of the curtained room,
Old melodies, and cast
Your shadows 'long the ivory keys,
Where she invokes the past.

Then glide away, as the light grows bright
Within the blazing room,
But leave the scent of your lilies here,
And Memory's soft perfume.

WHEN THE CORN'S LAID BY.

Thar's lots er things I'm gwine ter do,
When the corn's laid by;
I'll hunt the shade and hug it, too,
When the corn's laid by.
I'll set down by the crick an' fish,
An' mebbe I will git my wish,
Thet one I know will come and say:
"Now hain't it good to see the day
When the corn's laid by?"

An' mebbe she will set by me,
 When the corn's laid by,
An' lean her head agin my knee,
 When the corn's laid by,
An' talk so mighty pert an' sweet
Thet hit will be the finest treat—
An' mebbe then, 'at she'll agree
To what I axed—well, we will see,
 When the corn's laid by.

Then mebbe she'll come home with me,
 When the corn's laid by,
An' live beneath the old roof-tree,
 When the corn's laid by.
In fact, I 'spect she'll be my wife
To love an' cherish all my life,
An' re'ly I could never ask
A better or a sweeter task,
 When the corn's laid by.

Yes, I will have a heap er fun,
 When the corn's laid by;
For then the rest of fall's begun,
 When the corn's laid by.
The work will jis be harvestin'
An' fillin' every empty bin,
To feed the folks, an' cattle, too,
An' arm old Father Winter thoo,
 When the corn's laid by.

Another thing I'm gwine to do,
 When the corn's laid by;
I'm gwine ter lick that Hogan crew,
 When the corn's laid by.
Ef 'twarnt for losing, from the plow,
A day—er mo'—I'd do it now,
An' so I reckin I kin wait,
For sholy hit woan be too late,
 When the corn's laid by.

MY OWN KENTUCKY GIRL.

Young Cupid's bow is modeled
 By the curve of that sweet mouth,
And her breath is like the perfume
 Of the breezes from the south;
Her hair is fair and golden,
 And her eye is clear and blue;
Her laugh is rippling, richest wine;
 Her heart is fresh and true.

She comes to meet me, flying,
 And her welcome's like the spring,
With smiles and tears of gladness,
 And she makes my old heart sing.
'Tis light and life to meet her,
 And there's chaste and perfect bliss
When she lifts her face and gives me
 A daughter's sweetest kiss.

Oh! how lovingly she leads me
Thro' old-time homestead halls,
And halts where pictured faces
Of dead loved ones, on the walls
Look down and smile upon us,
And give their welcome, too,
While 'cross my face the shadow flies
Of grief that comes anew.

But come the days and go the days,
And we are happy there,
For I love to watch those eyes of blue
And kiss the sunny hair;
And I'm proud to see her spring upon
Her mettled thoroughbred,
And gallop through the woodlands,
Where the blue-grass carpet's spread.

She is blithe and bright and winsome,
But there will come a day
When some lover of another kind
Will spirit her away,
By the spell that wins these dear ones—
Aye, even such a pearl
As this, my old heart's sweetheart;
My own Kentucky girl.

IKE.

Ike's hat was made of plaited straw,
An' 'peared a good size stack,
Ez it flopped about his shoulders,
An' meandered down his back;
His shirt was common fact'ry,
An' his britches was of jeans,
An' him, a long an' ganglin' cuss,
Jis outen of his teens.

I think it was, in common, 'lowed,
Et Ike could hoe mo' cawn,
An' worm an' top mo' 'backer,
Fo' the blowin' of the hawn,
En any man yan side the crick,
Fur miles an' miles aroun',
An' yit, you sildom seed him here,
Er loafin' 'bout the town.

He never 'lowed whut he could do,
But went an' done it fus,
An' anyone could josh him, lots,
An' not ezpect a muss.
He was peaceful as er sack er oats,
An' some was 'clined to say,
He was light about the livah—
Er sorter thater way.

'Twuz late along one summer time—
We'd all laid by ow cawn—
A lot of us was loafin' 'roun',
An' some was sorter gone,
On rock-en-rye, an' sich like truck,
Fum ouden Nagle's sto',
When a feller, jis 'bout six-foot-two,
Comes stalkin' in the do.'

He wo' a pa'r er navy guns,
En a knife, I think, er two,
An' he 'lowed a mighty heap er things,
'Bout all that he could do.
Well, I kep' on a layin' back,
An' didn' aim to rise—
I hadn' lost no fightin' man—
Eespeshly of his size.

The feller 'lowed he'd come out here
To run the place awhile,
Then take the pootyiss gal an go,
Ez that was 'bout his style.
He hadn' mo' than said it, good
Tell Ike lit inter him,
An' the wuss licked man I evah seed
Was that gun-loadened slim.

Ike swep' the flo' an' road with him,
An' thowed him crost some logs,

Then tuck his guns, an' shot 'em off,
An' flung 'em to the hogs,
En tuck his knives an hacked the blades,
Tell they was only saws,
An' sence that day, the word of Ike
Has ben ow statoot laws.

A SONG FOR TENNESSEE.

A hundred years, dear Tennessee;
A hundred years and one,
Among the sisterhood of states,
And duties nobly done;
Yet never shone a brighter smile
Upon a fairer face
Than thine, proud daughter of the South,
Nor one of sweeter grace.

So here's to thee,
Dear Tennessee,
Far famed in song and story;
And may you be
Forever free,
And clothed in love and glory.

A hundred years, dear Tennessec,
Of honor, worth and truth;
A hundred years, and you have grown
In strength and rosy youth;

The summers come and smiling go,
And leave the gentle trace
Of health and joy, and beauty's glow
Upon thy wholesome face.

A hundred years, dear Tennessee,
And may ten thousand more
Bring all the wealth of happiness
That they may have in store,
To thee and thine, oh, lovely one!
So shall thy children sing
A psalm of praise, a song of love,
And make thy mountains ring.

WHEN BEN BRUSH WON THE DERBY.

No fairer, brighter, softer day,
Had old Kentucky seen in May;
The track was fast, the betting bold,
And eager every three-year-old;
The quarter stretch was packed, alive,
By men, like bees within a hive;
The grand stand seemed a vast bouquet
Of handsome women, bright and gay,
Of brilliant dress, and with the fair
Were gallant men, beside them there,
When Ben Brush won the Derby.

From far and near, on Churchill Downs,
Had gathered folk from farms and towns
From river craft and camp and fort
To revel in the royal sport,
Where, under saddle, spur and lash
And flying like a lightning flash,
The colts and fillies fought to win
New glory for their breed and kin.
Thus proudly came the game array,
Upon that lovely day in May,
When Ben Brush won the Derby.

A quarter back behind the string,
The entries made their starting spring,
High bred Ulysses at the pole—
With hope to hold it to the goal—
And then Ben Eder, Brush and all;
But gallant Brush came near a fall,
When at the clang of starter's bell,
The field went dashing down, pell mell;
So First Mate set the rattling pace
In that hot foot and famous race,
When Ben Brush won the Derby.

Ben Eder pushed young First Mate out,
And from the stand a roaring shout
Came from his partisans, and then
The field was bunched behind brave Ben,

Along the back stretch thus they flew.
Ben Eder's distance barely grew—
And so they reached the upper turn,
While every rider bent to earn,
With whip and spur, a better place,
And yet it looked like Eder's race,
When Ben Brush won the Derby.

Around the turn, and down the home,
The flyers came, all white with foam.
By full three lengths or more ahead
The two Bens bravely, madly sped,
Ben Eder leading Brush a length,
When, with a burst of speed and strength
Ben Brush pressed forward at the close
And 'neath the wire pushed his nose,
Then from the crowd wild huzzas rose,
Loud and alike, from friends and foes,
When Ben Brush won the Derby.

BALCAZAR.

His eye is dark and threatening,
And kingly is his mien—
He comes of a race of monarchs
And his mother was a queen.
His step is proud, his spirit high
And he is strong and bold;

Yet the gentlest hand may guide him
As it did the knights of old.

His ancestors had been the friends
Of noble lords and kings,
And from the days of errantry
Their fame the poet sings.
In love and war, and in the chase,
In castle, town and home,
'Twas known before the Cæsars,
Or a hierarch of Rome.

See where he stands and waits for me ;
Now glancing through the trees,
And 'cross the verdant meadow lands,
Whence comes the odor'd breeze
That blows aslant his ebon hair—
Good-bye ; his call I heed,
For he's my friend, that's well beloved—
My gallant, high-bred steed.

THE RIFLE IN THE HALL.

From the days of Boone and Kenton,
In "the Dark and Bloody Ground,"
To the days when homes and gardens
In the blue-grass land abound ;
Since it sent its leaden messengers
To bring the savage down,

We have blest the good old rifle
Of Kentucky and renown.

It is long, and grim, and rusty,
And out of date its lock,
And tarnished are the mountings
In brass upon its stock,
But we love the ancient weapon,
Resting high against the wall;
That old Kentucky rifle,
On the buckhorns in the hall.

By the date and letters graven
On its butt, we understand
That our grandsire was its master,
And in his sturdy hand
It cleared the way for progress,
Thro' many a savage fray,
To where 'tis dumbly hanging
On the buckhorns there today.

Thro' trial and the wilderness,
His faithful guard and guide,
'Twas cherished by that hardy soul,
And 'twas his boast and pride.
Now, 'mong the rich bequests he left
The dearest of them all
Is the long Kentucky rifle
On the buckhorns in the hall.

NEW GROUND.

The trees were girdled, long ago,
Down in that woodland piece,
That lay along between the creeks
And joining Closser's lease.
'Tis sad to see that gentle spring
Brings now no foliage there,
But leaves the trees in nakedness,
Their long arms thin and bare.

The birds have flown, and far away
In plaintive song they tell
Of how, before the sounding ax,
The old trees, groaning fell.
The shady nooks of other days,
The sun and glare have found,
And men have come with fire and spike
For clearing up the ground.

The trees are logs, the boughs are gone,
In heaps the trunks now lie,
And heaving, 'mid their drink and song,
Log rollers vaunting vie ;
Young boys are burning heaps of brush ;
The log piles blaze, and bright
The fires burn throughout the day
And glare the sky at night.

The other fields are old and worn,
 Beneath the farmer's toil ;
The crops of many years have drained
 The nurture of the soil.
So thus the woods where you and I,
 As hoyden children played,
Are gone, as have the happy days
 Within the sylvan shade.

THE FEE' LARK'S SONG.

"I—chee—wee!" "I—chee—wee!"
Harkee! mammy, hark!
There he is; can't you see?
He's the first fee' lark.

See him settin' on the fence?
I thess think his style's immense;
Nen I know thess w'at he sings,
Cos he sings it all the springs;

"Pull them shoes off, mighty fas',
Turn them toeses out to grass."
He can say a heap, you see,
With his little "I—chee—wee!"

OUR CABIN.

It was early in November ;
Ah, the time I well remember !
Tho' that was more than sixty years ago,
When I came here with my honey,
Blest with health but not with money,
And I had my Old Virginia blood and brawn.

We'd a wagon load of "plunder,"
And a love that naught could sunder ;
To one another we were all the earth,
And the changes time has brought us
Have but only sweetly taught us
That fidelity's its own and truest worth.

Oh ! 'twas lovely in this valley
When myself and darling Sally
Camped on the banks of the clear and babbling
stream
And the forest, deep and olden,
Tinted scarlet, green and golden,
Sang vespers while we dreamed a happy dream.

Here I built my love a bower,
Tho' its sweetest, fairest flower
Was the little wife who dwelt therein with me ;

And we wrought, with hope, together,
In the bracing autumn weather,
Buoyant and happy, ardent, young and free.

Then the forest, dark and hoary,
Gave from 'mid its lusty glory
The timbers for our little cabin here,
And the neighbors came and "raised" it,
Sweet Sally blessed and praised it,
And no other home has ever seemed so dear.

With the years that have been flowing
From the fount of time and going,
The cabin home has grown with every day,
And the sun is broadly streaming
Where were forests, and the gleaming
In the valley, is the harvest's proud array.

Much wealth has come to bless us
And but little to distress us,
And the house has grown to be a mansion fair ;
Still I find my mem'ry holding
Apart, and fondly folding
To itself, the cot I built for Sally there.

MY MOTHER'S PORTRAIT.

I have come to the home of my childhood;
Come back from the toil and the strife
Of the roaring world back to the wildwood
And rest in the evening of life.
I came through the forest and farmland,
And up thro' the roses, along
By the banks of the lake of this charmland,
And heard the free meadow-lark's song.

The lion-head, dull brazen knocker
Is yet on the door of the hall;
Inside is the old-fashioned rocker,
The dearest old chair of them all.
I sit in its arms, that invite me,
And gaze on a face that is fair;
A face that smiles sweetly and brightly,
And lovingly welcomes me there.

Oh, dark are the curls that are falling
About the fair shoulders and face,
And soft are the eyes that seem calling
Her wandering boy to his place
In the arms that so tenderly held him,
In infancy's innocent days;
Dear white arms, that never repelled him,
Tho' ever so wayward his ways.

Oh, God! could I have my sweet mother
Forever and ever with me,
She, dearest of all—and another,
Whose loved name shall nameless here be—
My burden of life and its sorrow,
Would sink in joy's fathomless sea,
And bright would come shining each morrow,
A blessing, dear Father, from Thee.

A LOVE SONG.

I love you, my sweetheart; my sweetheart, I
love you,
And wish I might kiss your bonny, sweet
mouth,
Down there, 'mid the roses that, dripping with
eve-dew
Are 'stilling, by moonshine, the balm of the
South.

My darling, my sweetheart, the days are so
dreary,
And weary the years that drag slowly along,
When I am away from the arms of my dearie,
That life is a sigh and the ghost of a song.

Will the time ever come, my darling, my sweet-
heart,

When here in the strong arms that longingly
wait,

You will rest thus forever, and never to part
From love that is deep and defiant of fate ?

My darling, my dearie, my love and my idol,
I am worshiping now at the sanctified shrine,
Wherein hath been hallowed the vows of a bridal
That made you in soul, if not mortally mine.

My heart is the censer, where incense is burning—
The incense of love that is fragrant and strong—
The eyes of my soul to your image are turning,
And breathing my love-prayer, I sing you this
song :

I love you, my sweetheart; my sweetheart, I
love you ;

Each moment of life is a tear and a sigh ;
Oh, come to the arms that so longingly wait you,
Come to the love that's as deep as the sky.

DOWN AT THE ROCKY SPRING.

A winding path that tumbled down
A steep and grassy hill,
Found, at the foot, a rocky spring
Where I have drunk my fill
Of water pure and cold as that
Of which the prophet wrote,
When Israel drank, beside the rock,
That good old Moses smote.

A little house of rough-hewn stone ;
A low and heavy door ;
A roof o'ergrown with greenest moss ;
Of solid rock the floor.
I've shadowed old Aunt Easter there,
And followed down the path,
To find her busy, skimming milk,
And met her feigned wrath.

“ You little scamp ; I know yo' tricks ;
You thinks you's fine as silk ;
I knows you comes er ha'ntin' 'roun'
Fur some er dis yer milk.
But you is gwinter miss yo' lick
Dis time, I tells you now ;
Kase you ain't wuff yo' daily salt—
Dat's whut yo' mammy 'low.”

But well I knew Aunt Easter's way ;
Her pretense, grim and stern—
My time would come when she had filled
The clean, old butter churn.
“ Come hyar ! Dis milk is gwinter spile ;
Dar's heap too much today ;
But dis is jes' de las' you gits—
You heah me, whut I say ? ”

So there I sit—across the sill—
And quaff the goodly bowl ;
Aunt Easter's happy as the boy—
God bless her dear old soul !
Since then, full oft, I've sought the place,
And plucked the mint that grew
Along the branch, below the spring—
And found it mixed with rue.

I've drank the rich and sparkling wines
Of sunny France and Spain,
And felt the splendid joys they bring ;
Their misery and pain.
But no such healthful, hearty draught
Will poet ever sing,
As that Aunt Easter gave me, oft,
Down at the rocky spring.

THE OLD GRINDSTONE.

I'm glad the old thing's broken,
And its bench is torn apart;
When I was but a sapling
Of a boy, it broke my heart.
There it lies, dismantled, ruined,
And 'tis joy to see it prone,
That instrument of torture,
The old grindstone.

I stand upon its segments—
Nearly buried where they lie—
And memory of that anguish
Brings a tear into my eye.
I am glad the days of sorrow,
That it brought to me, have flown,
And I can stand and stamp upon
The old grindstone.

So many days in summer,
When the fish were biting fine,
I've yearned to tantalize them
With my brand-new hook and line,
But had to work the handle
Until wearied to the bone,
And turn, till I was dizzy,
The old grindstone.

At noontime, in the haying
 When the dark and grassy shade
Was cooling and inviting,
 I have felt my color fade
When father, or big brother,
 Would call in gruffest tone :
“Come here, you scamp, and turn awhile
 The old grindstone!”

I've made it whizz and wobble
 Till the blade it ground would ring;
And when it needed water,
 I must bring that from the spring;
But when I thought of resting,
 I was “just a lazy drone,”
For it seemed I was the slaveling of
 The old grindstone.

The years are very many
 Since the trials of my youth,
And, though I've wished them back again,
 To tell the honest truth,
I think I'd rather bear the ills
 Along my pathway strown,
Than be a boy and turn again
 The old grindstone.

ON NEXT COURT DAY.

“ I’ll tell you, Jim, thar ain’t no use
To talk on this no mo’.
I’ve tuck a heap er yo’ abuse,
Fur sartain en fur sho’.
We’ll settle hit next time we meet—
You hear me say my say—
An’ that’ll be plum’ in the street,
In town on county cote day.”

“ Say, Sam, I want to talk with you
’Bout clarin’ up some groun’,
Now, tell me what you wanten do,
Fur cash, or dicker, down.”
“ Well, I hain’t fittin’, Tom, jes now—
Ain’t in the peartest way—
But we kin fix hit up, I ’low,
In town on county cote day.”

“ I’ve got a Glencoe colt, Bill Dick,
I’ll swop you fur that mar’.
His pedigree is pooty slick,
En he will be a star.”
“ I’ve noticed him a time or two—
You mean that gilden bay?—
Well, I kin tell you what I’ll do
In town on county cote day.”

“ Oh, yes, indeed ! I hearn some talk
 'Bout nominatin' Bright ;
But he will hatter walk the chalk
 Ef he gets thar all right.
Still, howsumdever, ef we kin,
 The voters up ow way
Will work a scheme to git him in,
 At town on county cote day.”

For fights, or trades, or politics,
 Or anything of note,
That takes some leisure time to fix,
 It's set for county “ cote ”—
Election time, just now and then—
 But whether grave or gay,
'Tis oftenest, among these men,
 “ In town on county cote day.”

WAITING FOR THE CALL.

An old gray house, on an old-time farm—
 'Twas on a Christmas night—
Thro' chinks were streaming rays of charm
 In yellow shafts of light.

An old gray white and an old gray black
 Were sitting by the blaze

That curled and played on the chimney back—
Sat thinking their own old ways.

Said the old black man to the old white man:
“ Hit’s fawty yeahs tonight
Sense you gin to me this piece er lan’,
An’ the pootyes’ gal in sight.

“ You gin us, ersides, dem papahs, too,
Dat sot us bon’ ones free,
An’ Nan an’ me sung ‘ Hally, Hally Loo ! ’
Lak er song er jubilee.”

“ Well, what if I did ? ” said the old gray white,
“ Didn’t both belong to me ?
And didn’t I have, by law, the right
To set my niggahs free ?

“ And, what is more,” said the old white man,
“ My farm was broad and long,
And didn’t you, and your poor old Nan,
Find life a sweeter song ? ”

“ Lawd bless you, marster, blessin’s fell
As fas’ as drops er rain ;
Yes, every soun’ was a silver bell,
Till God called Nan ergain.

“ But we wuz all de slaves you had,
An’ sense you b’en so po’
I’s e felt dat we wuz actin’ bad
To wish for freedom so.”

“ No more! no more!” said the old white man ;
“ I’m richer than a king !
You give me blessings, all you can ;
I need not anything.

“ And, more than all, am I not blest,
While waiting for the call ?
I gave you Freedom, God’s bequest,
Intended for us all.”

FETCH OVER THE CANOE.

Oh ! list the call across the stream :

“ Who-ee ! Who-ee ! ”

’Tis like an echo in a dream ;
The mock-bird laughs the cry anew,
As if some secret sweet he knew,
And ’cross the rippling waters blue
Comes, furrowing, a gum-canoe.

“ Who-ee ! Who-ee !

Fetch over the canoe ! ”

I see the bushes parting,
And a dainty gown of blue.

A laughing maiden guides the boat ;
 Who-ee! Who-ee!
She seems a fairy there afloat ;
The saucy mock-bird flying screams,
The purling water glints and gleams,
And 'mong the lilies, crushing through,
The maiden drives her light canoe.
 Who-ee! Who-ee!
 Here lies the gum-canoe,
 And here's the laughing maiden
 In her dainty gown of blue.

Oh, that was long and long ago !
 Who-ee! Who-ee!
No longer there the lilies grow ;
The woods are gone, the mock-bird's flown ;
A bridge across the stream is thrown ;
Along the shores a city grew ;
The maiden's grave is 'neath the yew.
 Who-ee! Who-ee!
 Where is the old canoe ?
 And where the pretty maiden,
 In her dainty gown of blue ?

No more the gold and crimson hints—
 Who-ee! Who-ee!
Of autumn there, the bank-side tints ;
The maiden's smile in memory lives ;

My soul a sigh that memory gives,
And in my heart grows weeping rue,
Mourning the maid and her canoe.

Who-ee! Who-ee!

Good-bye, old gum-canoe.

No more you'll bring the maiden
In her dainty gown of blue.

A SUMMER NIGHT.

I saw a disk of molten gold
Sink down against the western edge;
Then cleave the purple of the wold
As 'twere a great and shining wedge
That's driven 'neath an unseen sledge.

A gray triangle sweeps along,
Toward the dark'ning eastern line,
Where evening stars in twinkling throng
Make merry at the day's decline;
And lonely stands a sentry pine.

Above the southern wood the moon
Swings up, a burnished silver wheel;
Sad sounding comes the night-bird's croon;
Along the breeze sweet odors steal,
And night, in summer, sets its seal.

SONGS WE USED TO SING.

Tenderly touching and sweet to the soul,
Are the songs we used to sing,
As along the halls of the years we stroll,
Where echoing now they ring.

The heart is filled with a memory dear
Of a maiden fond and coy,
And the eye is dewed with a pitying tear
For the first love of a boy.

So comes the old song back once more,
That oft we sang in days of yore :

“ Oh ! don't you remember sweet Alice, Ben Bolt,
Sweet Alice with hair so brown ?
She wept with delight when you gave her a smile,
And trembled with fear at your frown.”

The mock-bird's song and the wail of the dove,
The “ Bob White ” pipe of the quail,
The nesting larks as they twitter their love,
The beat of the thresher's flail,
The shade and the shine of the dear old South,
And its fields of waving corn,
The mellow sound from the vibrant mouth
Of the welcome dinner horn.

So comes the old song back again,
In dulcet burden and refrain :

“The sun shines bright in the old Kentucky
home,
’Tis summer, the darkies are gay;
The corn-top’s ripe and the meadow’s in the
bloom,
While the birds are making music all the day.”

The hewed-log meeting-house, deep in the wood,
Has gone with the passing years;
A grass-grown hillock now marks where it stood,
That memory dews with her tears.
’Twas old Mount Zion, the loved and the blest,
Of souls so simple and true,
And they have gone to the peace and the rest,
That lies ’neath the sorrowing yew.
So comes the old song back once more,
That oft we sang in days of yore:

“Here I’ll raise my Ebenezer,
Hither by thy help I’ll come;
And I hope by thy good pleasure
Safely to arrive at home.”

How swells the heart of the patriot crew,
Where proud the banner streams,
That’s called “Old Glory,” the Red, White and
Blue,
Whose star-light flashes and gleams

From mountain to ocean and over the seas,
The pride of a blessed land,
And long may it wave in Columbia's breeze,
The gift of a hero band.

So comes the old song back again,
In dulcet burden and refrain :

"Oh ! say, can you see by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last
gleaming ?"

Where in the hot focal blaze of the fight
The war-god shook his sable plume,
And where the red-breathed brazen cannon's
blight.

Deep dyed the field with crimson spume ;
In lulls of battle, twixt the roars of strife,
Like laugh of children in a gale,
I've heard the music of the drum and fife,
Playing amid the iron hail,
The game old song that comes again,
In dulcet burden and refrain :

"'Way down South, in de land of cotton,
'Simmon seed an' sandy bottom,
Lookaway, lookaway, lookaway,
Dixie's land."

OLD-TIME MELODIES.

Thin and white are the faded hands,
That tremble o'er the ivory keys,
'Mong old-time melodies they reach,
And from the past a cadent breeze
Comes singing low—so sweetly low—
The dear loved songs of long ago.

There's tender love; there's blessed love;
There's joy, dear one, for you and me,
In those sweet songs that come again,
To ripple mem'ry's placid sea;
'Tis echo of a halcyon time
Borne hither from a balmy clime.

Such were the songs you sung to me
'Mid roses and the rich perfume
That came on zephyrs from the banks
Embroidered bright in pansy bloom;
They rose within your pretty mouth
Blent with the accent of the South.

And I could bless the ivory keys,
That 'neath the trembling finger-tips
Bring back the songs of long ago.
That kissed my sweetheart's crimson lips:
Dear lips, fond lips, that yet are mine,
Bedewed with love's own honeyed wine.

LUCIE LEE OF TENNESSEE.

I'll sing of dear old Tennessee,
In the days of long ago,
And sing of lovely Lucie Lee,
As in the olden glow
We floated down the rippling stream,
In my poplar-tree canoe,
At evening-time, and lived the dream
And the song of lovers true.

Oh, Lucie Lee of Tennessee !
Though that was long ago,
I love you still, and ever will,
Come to me weal or woe ;
And yet again my song's refrain,
For you, my Lucie Lee,
Will echoing ring, as I shall sing,
Along the Tennessee.

We rambled where wild flowers grew,
And we loved their sweet perfume ;
With them we decked the old canoe
Till it seemed to be in bloom ;
Amid the pinks and columbines,
As we sped the boat along,
And 'mong the honeysuckle vines,
We sang love's sweetest song.

Then Lucie truly promised me
She'd love me evermore,
And wait beside the Tennessee,
And sing along its shore,
Till I came back from toil and strife,
On Fortune's changeful sea,
To claim, forever, for my wife,
My dark-eyed Lucie Lee.

IN MISSISSIPPI WOODS.

Some blue spots dashed with springtime haze,
Seen thro' magnolia trees and bays;
The emerald green of tall pine tops,
A laggard breeze, to bend them, stops;
A crimson splash of maple bloom,
A scent of "sweet shrub's" soft perfume,
The snow of dogwood, hiding low,
The lazy call of a loafing crow;
The mock-bird's laugh, that sneering rings
Because an humbler songster sings;
Of sun and shade a perfect day,
In southern March like northern May.
We rambled there—sweet Belle and I—
And heard the forest laugh and cry.
In maiden fancy, bright and free,
She thought the deep old woods a sea.

The rich-robed birds, with whirr and swish,
In dashing by were flashing fish.

Pine cones were conch shells on the floor,
And souging winds the ocean's roar.

 The great white clouds above the tips
 Of waving trees, were full-sailed ships,
With romance laden, for the land
Where Love stands shivering on the strand.

But here, within the forest deep,
Where angels through the blue spots peep,
 We wandered far—sweet Belle and I—
 And heard the forest laugh and cry.
To crown her sire's birthday fete,
We gathered bloom and tarried late.

DANCING IN THE OLD TIME.

For his love of "Kerry dancing,"
 Sweet the Irish poet sings;
But to me far more entrancing,
 As returned on memory's wings,
Are the dances and the luncheons
 In the cabins long ago,
And the way we shook the puncheons
 To the strains of "Old Jim Crow."

From his chair, high on a table,
In the happy, old-time days,
There the fiddler, gray and sable,
Stamps a foot and gaily plays :
Plays his "Hear de Bells a-Ringing,"
Then his "Snowbird at de Do',"
While he calls the figures, singing:
"Swing dem cawnders!" "Forrid fo'!"

His favorite, "Old Leather Breeches,"
Rings thro' memory in my ear,
And his singing, "Full er Stitches,"
Blends with rattling "Forked Deer."
All the girls in linsey dresses,
All the boys in homemade jeans,
When they swing, each rascal presses
Close the girl that on him leans.

You may have the stately "lancers";
Give me back the other days,
And the jolly, romping dancers,
Seen thro' memory's thick'ning haze,
Those were sweet days, I remember,
Just as these will be to all,
When they see, from life's November,
Where the length'ning shadows fall.

THE KENTUCKIAN'S LAMENT.

I useter live in old Kaintuck some forty year ago,
An' come back here again, to stop, a week er
two, er mo',
But now I'm goin' back out West, an' stay thar
too, my son,
'Kase I don't like the changes that the times has
gone an' done.

Thar useter be a little crick a 'runnin' 'neath this
hill,
An' further down thar useter stan' a monst'ous
fine old mill;
I've waded in that little crick, an' fished fur min-
ners thar,
An' watched the mus'rats divin' in the water
fresh an' clar.

I useter ride a grist to mill—a sack er Injun
cawn—
Jis' many a time, in them old days, so long 'fo'
you was bawn;
An' me an' all the yuther boys—in winter time,
you know—
Was parchin' cawn, an' swappin' lies ontell we
had to go.

That little crick has gone plum' dry, the mill is
all to' down,
An' blamed ef they ain't tuck the spot to build
er onry town,
An' where the big-road useter run thar's growin'
weeds an' grass,
An' thar's a cut, clean thro' the hill, fur railroad
kyars to pass.

Them shell-bark hick'ry trees is gone, whar me
an' yo' Aunt Sue,
Has gather'd nuts, so many falls, when we was
size er you ;
An' over yan, whar houses stan' along the south
hill side,
Thar stood the woods, an' pawpaws growed an'
possums useter hide.

The boys as useter play with me, when I was but
a kid,
Has all turned gray—'cep' them that's bald—
an' some the ground has hid ;
An' stid er jeans, an' home'ade socks, an' all the
like er that,
Sto' close is all the go, mer son, them an' the—
bee-gum hat.

The sasser ain't no longer used to po' yo' coffee
in,
An' eatin' with yo' knife has grow'd to be a
mortal sin;
An' what is wuss than all the rest, an' seems to
me mos' quar'
Cocktails, an' sich like truck as that, has knock'd
out whisky clar.

These things is much too much for me. It's
broke my heart in two,
It's ru'nous to the country, an' it aint'er goin'
ter do;
I'm goin' back—you hear me shout—clean back
to Washin'tun;
I want'er find Old Skookumchuck, an' stay thar,
too, mer son.

DOWN SOUTH.

I.

Tis summer in the quiet land of bloom,
'Neath skies that winter never knew;
In forests deep the dusky cypress plume
Nods where the wild-vine tendrils clew
Among the humbler growth, beneath the shade
Of centuried and hoary oaks,

And where the rainbow-tinted sunbeams fade
Under the long and trailing cloaks
Of mosses, bannered to the lofty boughs,
That weave a close and leafy screen,
For nooks where fly-begoaded cattle browse,
In covers cool, of grateful green.

II.

Before the facade of the deep, dark wood,
The fallow-fields and pastures lie;
And ripening harvests, teeming, rich and good,
Give pleasing promise to the eye.
Among the china and the orange trees,
And flowers of myriad dye,
And jasmine vines, that in each balmy breeze
Their gay and golden showers fly,
There stands, with open doors, a planter's home,
And stillness reigns about its halls,
Except the sound of bees around the comb,
Or ring-dove's low and distant calls.

III.

The sunflower droops in comely grace
Before the day-king's fervid rays—
A Clytie fair, who bends her modest face
Beneath Apollo's ardent gaze.
A shimmering haze is in the air,
The mocking bird his riot stills,

The river glints beneath the sun's fierce glare,
And mists hang o'er the far-off hills.
The pigeons croon beneath the eaving-frieze,
A kitten sleeps in "mammy's" lap,
And in a hammock, swung betwixt two trees,
"Old marster" takes his noon-tide nap.

OLD MART AN' ME.

Hit's been so monstrous long ago it seems jes
like a dream,
Sence we was only chunks er boys—a rough-an'
tumble team—
That useter dam the spring house branch an' set
up flutter wheels,
An' work so dead in arnest that we often miss'd
our meals,
An' sometimes fit en quarreled till we war a
sight to see,
An' frequent we got licked for that,
Old Mart an' me.

Time come we had to go to school—some funder
en a mile—
But what we larnt, until this day, jis sorter
makes me smile;
'Twas little mo than nuthin', en we got it, inch
by inch,

While the teacher lammed it to us, till we had
the mortal cinch

On everything the old man knowed, plum to the
rule of three,

But frequent we got licked for that,
Old Mart an' me.

We was raised on farms adjinin' with plenty all
aroun'

But still we'd skip off, atter dark, an' pole away
to town,

Three mile, up hill, ef 'twar a foot, an' jine the
boys up there,

To eat sardines, and smoke seegyars, an' have a
sort of "tare,"

Or rob a neighbor's million patch—for deviltry,
you see,

But frequent we got licked for that,
Old Mart an' me.

At spellin' bouts and singin' school, thar's whar
we useter shine ;

We couldn't spell a little bit, ner sing so mighty
fine,

But when it come to courtin' gals an' seein' of
'em home,

Why we was thar, an' you hear me, 'twas honey
in the comb,

Then Widder Kane got married, an' we raised a
shivaree—

But didn't we get licked for that,
Old Mart and me!

When finally the war broke loose, an' Mart an'
me went in,

One time we struck a scrimmage that was live-
lier en sin;

We had it, back an' forrards, twict, acrost a
cotton patch—

You never seed, in all yo' life, a hotter shootin'
match—

I got a plug clean th'oo my leg, an' him one in
the knee,

So, we got sorter licked at that
Old Mart and me.

We've had some ups and downs in life, and
growin' kinder old,

With hearts as warm as ever, an' they never will
get cold.

So fur as him an' me's consarned; not even
over thar,

When all are called to answer at the final jedg-
ment bar,

For friendship's close to holiness, and blamed
ef I can see,

How we'll get licked a bit for that,
Old Mart an' me.

HARP OF THE SOUTH.

"Harp of the North," the Wizard sang,
And tuned his glowing lays
'Mid gallant deeds and battle's clang
And clan to clan's affrays.
Could I but sing so sweet a song—
And strong as Scotia's bard,
I'd ring the charge of every wrong
Till tyranny set guard;
More fit, for me, a sweet refrain
Of home and long ago,
Harp of the South, I strike again
The dear, old, quaint banjo.
No organ's diapason swell,
In grand cathedral, dim,
E'er on the heart of novice fell,
In vesper's sacred hymn,
With more impress of love and soul,
And deep devotion true,
Than Southern song to mem'ry's goal
Thus borne, my harp, by you.

And now I sing, to the banjo ring,
In tune by memory led,
And hear a sound like whispers 'round
The grave of the Past, long dead;

'Tis a whir and a hum,
And a doleful thrum,
But music my heart can feel—
I hear as before,
In days of yore,
Black mammy's spinning wheel.

It brings me joy, as when a boy
I sat in her cabin door,
And heard her sing to the spindle's ring,
As she paced the "puncheon" floor;
From the dawn to the gloam,
In the old South home,
A mammy true, black and leal,
She trudged to and fro,
In the long ago,
And wrought at her spinning wheel.

How blest the days, how sweet the ways,
That Kate and I saw then—
My sister Kate, whom God and fate,
Have taken to His Aidenn.
Now 'neath the orange trees,
Kissed by each balmy breeze,
That thro' magnolias steal,
Under the bloom
Lies Katie's tomb,
And still's the spinning wheel.

IN MEXICO.

I loved a maid in Mexico,

A dark-eyed senorita, kind and sweet
And tho' that was so long ago,

My heart is still a captive at her feet.
Oft thro' her latticed balcony, and long,

I've watched her thrum the light guitar,
And heard her sing the gay bolero song,
My love, my life, my Mexic star.

I see her eyes, so dark and bright,
And hear her voice, so soft and low ;
'Tis living in my soul tonight,
With dreams of her and Mexico.

She's waiting there, in Mexico,

My dark-haired maid, my sweetheart, fond
and true ;

She'll wait for me, where 'er I go,

With love as pure and fresh as honey-dew.
Her great black eyes, so tender and so deep,
Will watch for me, and brightly beam
To hear my name, and faithfully she'll keep
Her troth, as fair as angel's dream.

So come, fair fortune, come to me ;
I long to go, I long to go,
Across the land and Southern sea,
To dear Inez, in Mexico.

CHRISTMAS IN THE OLE TIME.

Now, love, come and sing with me,
Within this home beside the sea ;
And sit you, daughter, at my knee,
 To help the homely rhyme.
I'll sing of days ere you were born :
Of apples and the gathered corn ;
Of darkies and the dinner horn,
 And Christmas in the ole time.

We'll tune the banjo to the lay,
And make the music light and gay,
For that, my loved ones, was the way
 Of "we-all," in the prime
And happy days of long ago,
When Uncle Jube and Mammy Chlo'
Made jolly times like honey flow
 For Christmas in the ole time.

More love shines in black mammy's face ;
More joy pervades the old home place ;
The sun streams down with softer grace ;
 The distant church bell's chime
Has sweeter music in its ring ;
More merrily the darkies sing,
And jollier greetings meetings bring,
 In Christmas in the ole time.

The stillicide of honey-bees ;
The grateful scent of od'rous trees ;
The balmy, perfume-laden breeze
 Of that dear sunny clime,
And all the happiness and glee
Are borne on memory's wing to me,
At home beside this western sea,
 Of Christmas in the ole time.

Christmas eve—the old plantation—
 See the quarters blaze with light ;
Hear the fiddle, bones and banjo ;
 People there are gay tonight.

Listen to the leader sing :
 “ Jine de song, you sassy niggahs ! ”
Hear the hearty chorus ring :
 “ Dat's all right, you call de figgahs ! ”

Dar's ole Marster, good en true ;
 Ah ha, oo hoo !
Ole Mistiss, she is dat way, too ;
 Ah ha, oo hoo !
Young Mars Jim en sweet Miss Sue —
 Ah ha, oo hoo !
Lawd bless all ole Marster's crew ;
 Ah ha, oo hoo !

Sing wid all yo' might en main,
Christmas, it am here again ;
Christmas come but once a year ;
W'en it come we has a sheer ;
Ah ha, oo hoo !

Turkey, he am mighty proud ;
Ah ha, oo hoo !
Struttin' roun' en gobblin' loud ;
Ah ha, oo hoo !
I'll pick his bone en spread his wing ;
Ah ha, oo hoo !
Chickin's neck I'se gwine to wring ;
Ah ha, oo hoo !

Sing wid all yo' might en main,
Christmas, it am here again ;
Christmas come but once a year ;
W'en it come we has a sheer ;
Ah ha, oo hoo !

Thus, and long, in sweet concordance,
Come the song and quaint refrain,
Trooping merrily and welcome
Down the years in mem'ry's train.

Daylight comes, and Christmas morning
Glides in through the eastern rift,
And the "people"—old and young ones—
"Ketch" the white folks' "Christmas gift."

Mammy herds the whooping youngsters—
White and black—within her call;
Mistress scatters Christmas presents
From the quarters to the hall.

Master storms, in anger's pretense,
In and out, about the place,
But the soul of all his goodness
Glistens in his jolly face.

Love and joy, with song and dancing,
In the olden Southern ways,
Tinted with the holy story,
Sped the happy holidays.

Now the banjo—harp of Southland—
Tuned with us in homely rhyme,
Rest, and with it, 'neath the willow,
"Christmas in the ole time."

WHEN THE JULEP'S RIPE.

Ole marster's feelin' mighty fine,
En I kin tell what's on his mine',
In cose de race time has to do
Some little wid his feelin's too,
But dat what's mos'ly pleasin' him,
An' puttin' him in sich good trim,

Is sompen of another stripe—
Hit's dem mint juleps gittin' ripe.

Fo' long you'll hear him callin' me,
An' sayin': "Go, you scamp, an' see
Ef you ca' fine some mint dat's fit
To make a julep; en ef hit
Is high ernuff fur dat, w'y take
Dem talles' sprigs en go en make
Dat soothin' draff, en bring it here,
En you'll have easy times dis year."

Den I gwine take er lump er two
Er nice cut shugar—hear me th'oo—
En 'solve it in some water—um!—
Den take erbout er gill er rum,
En 'bout three fingers whisky straight,
En mix 'em all—now ca' you wait?
Den jis fo' sprigs er mint in dar,
En han' him dat mint julep, sah.

Hit do me good to see him drink,
En smack he lips, an' set an' think
How long dat mint is gwineter las'!
But hit'll go, mos' monst'ous fas'.
An' all dat time I gwine to be
Right close to him, whar I kin see
Him smoke dat big ole cawncob pipe,
En 'joy dem juleps when dey's ripe.

Other Verse

Other Verse

THE GOVERNOR'S VIOLIN.

'Mid the silken perfumed elegance,
Within a stately house,
I've heard its rich tones ringing
Through the 'wilderings of Strauss,
And I've heard the sigh of gentle ones
Who listened while it bore
To charmed hearts, the sweetness
Of the touching "Trovatore."

I've heard it in the evening,
Within a quiet home,
Sing "Swanee River " till the bees
Came humming 'round the comb;
'Mid the phases of the wassail
And the joys of festal cheer,
I've heard it change from gay to grave,
From lively to severe.

In tender tones of pleading ;
In sighs of spent delight ;
In greetings to the morning
And in good-byes to the night ;

In storms upon the ocean
And in the songs of birds,
I've heard its voice, like a living thing,
In sweetest human words.

I've heard it give, stentorian,
Command in battle's blare,
And heard it whisper, soft and low,
Like angels in the air.

'Mong brawny men, in mining camps,
I've seen it hush a brawl,
Till clenched hands are open palms
That in each other fall.

I've seen it gather little ones
About the player's knee,
As did the babes of olden time
'Round Him of Galilee.
And to it oft I've listened,
Till all the world was kin,
While lovingly its master played
The Governor's violin.

THE BARBARIAN.

A grim, barbaric warrior heard
How Christ was crucified ;
How meek and uncomplainingly
He bent His head and died.
He heard, aghast, the dreadful tale,
Then seethed with wrath his brain :
“ Had I been there with three-score men,
The Christ had not been slain ! ”

As thus he spoke he fiercely grasped
The handle of his brand ;
In knots his brawny muscles stood
And he austere and grand.
“ Where were His brave defenders then ? ”
The chieftain might have asked,
Had he but longer in the light
Of Christian knowledge basked—
“ Where, then, the zealous champions
Who thousands since have slain—
The ‘ unbelievers ’ slaughtered
By inquisitors in Spain,
And in ‘ Bloody Mary’s ’ reign ? ”

As ’twas he questioned eagerly :
“ Where were the God-man’s friends—
They for whose immortal souls
He bent His aims and ends ?

Stood they about and raised no hand
To stay the murd'rous deed?
Where were their love and fortitude
In this high time of need?
And where the healed in sight and limb,
Who sought the Nazarene,
And touched His garments full of faith
That this would make them clean?"

"We are fighting yet His holy cause,"
A churchman stoutly said:
"His name shall be our Shibboleth,
Till all his foes are dead."
And yet the grim barbarian
Clutched hard his sword and cried,
"Had I been there with three-score men
Christ Jesus had not died—
He'd not been crucified!"

HERE'S TO YOU, MY BROTHER.

My friend and I—I love him—
God bless the skies above him,
Wherever 'neath their azure he may be—
We were lads the time I speak of,
And now we hear the creak of
The frost that chills the branches of life's tree.

We wandered in the mountains,
And we played beneath the fountains
That tumbled down the overhanging steep,
And we swam amid the driftings
Of the autumn's somber siftings,
From the trees of woodland pastures, neck deep.

Then the winter came, and flurries
Of the snow, in flights and scurries,
Laid the ermine covers deep upon the earth;
And the woods and halls were ringing
With our happy shouts and singing,
The echoes of the season's joy and mirth.

But those years succeeding morrows
Brought care, and age, and sorrows.
And the struggles life allots to earnest men;
They are mountains that divide us,
And the fountains oft deride us
When we seek to bring dear boyhood back again.

But the years have come unceasing,
Bringing joy, and care, increasing,
And there's compensation sweet within it all;
For love from loved ones found us,
And that fond delight surrounds us,
As a vine-clad, safe and flower-covered wall.

So, here's to you, my brother;
Though far from one another,

Let us drain the cup of good will from the brim,
And thank dear God above us,
That around are those who love us,
While we sing, again, a cheering Christmas hymn.

REFUGIUM.

There is no sweeter song than this ;
'Tis holy as a mother's kiss ;
And, oh, what promising of bliss !
The song from Zion, bright and blest :
Come unto me ; come unto me,
All ye that labor weariedly,
And I will give you rest.

So said the Master long ago,
And now 'tis heaven's song echo,
Flung back from Zion's hills that glow,
In golden splendor there on high ;
A sweet and peaceful song of love,
That comes as came the Jordan dove,
God's token from on high.

In gentle vibrance, on the strings
Of human hearts, the music rings.
And cheeringly an angel sings
To them that labor, sore oppress :
In time, beside the Great White Throne
The Nazarene will claim His own,
And He will give you rest.

A CRITIC'S REWARD.

Zo-i-lus was a critic,
In very ancient days,
And he dearly loved to pounce upon
Another fellow's lays;
So to Apollo, one fine day,
A fearful screed he took
In which he'd torn the flinders
From another fellow's book.

“And could you find no good, at all?”
Apollo asked the critic.
The latter rolled his milky eyes,
And in a breath mephitic
From long confinement, musty rooms,
And places dank and sad,
Declared himself: “I know no good;
’Tis mine to seek the bad.”

Then the god gave to the critic
A bundle—with a laugh—
“’Tis wheat unwinnowed; you may have,
For your reward, the chaff.”

MOUNT OF THE HOLY CROSS.

Where Nature's God hath roughest wrought
Where spring the purest fountains ;
Where, long ago, the Titans fought,
And hurled, for missiles, mountains ;
Where everlasting snows abide,
And tempest clouds are driven
Along the solid granite side
Of yawning chasms, riven
Deep in the Rockies' grandest pride,
That lifts its head to Heaven ;

Amid the wilds, where awful rise
The giant peaks that fathom
Night's starry depths and day's blue skies,
And brood above the chasm,
One monarch 'mongst the mighty hills
Rears high his summit hoary,
Like some grim king, whose legend fills
A page of olden story,
And heart o'erawes and soul enthrills,
Before his regal glory.

The Holy Cross of Christian faith,
Above the royal velvet,
In beauty shines, an emblem wraith,
High on his beetling helmet ;

Its white arms stretching through the sheen
Of silvery mist, are gleaming ;
A talisman, the world to screen,
Hope's symbol, in its seeming ;
A wonder grand, a joy serene,
Upon the ages beaming.

BABY'S MORNING.

When morning comes and sunlight streams
In tender, soft and golden gleams,
And through the curtains' dancing beams
 Steal coyly in the room,
My baby wakes in grave surprise,
And turns her great and wondering eyes
Toward the shimmering matin dyes
 That tint the lily bloom.

'Tis double morn to thee, sweet one—
The morn of day and a life begun—
God grant thy day and life-time's sun
 May ever sweetly shine ;
That happiness without alloy,
That cannot fail or ever cloy,
And brightest rays of purest joy,
 May bless each hour of thine.

THE GOURD BESIDE THE SPRING.

The gallant knight, in days of old,
Sang gaily flagon songs ;
The monarch drained his cup of gold
And laughed his people's wrongs ;
With goblets, flowing to the brim,
Bacchantes drink their wine,
But no alluring rosy rim
Brings song to harp of mine.

*Yet notes of memory sweetly come
In songs I love to sing,
Of hearty, healthy bumpers, from
The gourd beside the spring.*

The soldier loves his old canteen,
And sounds in song its praise ;
The lover toasts his mistress queen
In wine-begotten lays ;
The soul of poesy's outpoured
Alike to cup and king,
And all forget the brown old gourd
They drank from at the spring.

There's happiness in banquet halls,
Amid the bright and gay,
Where brilliant song the soul enthalls,
And wit and wine hold sway ;

But all the joys in memory stored
No sweeter thought can bring
Than those of draughts from out the gourd,
With Nell, beside the spring.

A LITTLE SHOE.

Thar ain't much poetry, that's a fact,
In a pa'r of worn out shoes,
But I've seen truck agoin', that lacked
As much of soul, or the muse.

I've got a shoe, 'bout's big's my thumb,
All gone at the heel and toe,
That makes my poor old heartstrings thrum
To the tune of long ago.

It's the shoe of a little baby boy,
Who was two or three worlds to me,
He come and went, and took all the joy
That ever I reckon to see.

The mother that bore him went along,
And it broke my heart in two ;
Sometimes I hear her lullaby song
When I'm holding that tiny shoe.

And I hear the patter of wee small feet,
That fitted it when it was new,
But all that's left is the memory sweet
And the little worn out shoe.

Thar ain't no poetry, much, in this,
But I think I've got the clue
To a road that leads to a mite of bliss,
If I follow this baby shoe.

SANDY McCANN.

To say that the hair of young Sandy McCann
Was auburn, was putting it fine, for the man
Had a head that just blazed, like the bird that
we see

A 'driving his bill in the cottonwood tree.
But Sandy delighted to stray from his home
And wander about 'neath the blue ether dome.

'Twas thus it once happened, when near his life's
prime,

That Sandy was gone such a very long time—
A decade or more—that his business and kin
Much needed to know of the parts he was in.
And thus the great search was so ably begun
To find the locale of the wandering one.

His starting was traced to a place where a man,
Had met on the Mexican border, McCann,
And a girl with red hair, about sixteen or so,
Said her father was Sandy, and ten years ago,
As she had oft heard, from her mother's own
mouth,
Had shouldered his traps and had gone further
south.

So trav'ling along, through the land of the sun,
Where people were gen'rally black-haired and
dun,
One day they brought up, with a well-founded
joy,
At a ranch where they saw a bright, red-headed
boy,
Whose name was McCann, but his father, he
said,
Left six years before and they thought he was
dead.

Undaunted, the searchers forwent needed rest
And pushed further south, with their clue and
their quest,
'Till, worn out and hungry, one blazing hot day,
Far down in Tabasco on Campeachy Bay,
They ran into cover a red-headed child,
Unkempt and disheveled, and very near wild.

But Sandy, the papa, had traveled some more,
So footsore and weary they turned from the
shore,

Back over the mountains and on to the plain,
In hope to recover the trail once again,
And fortune soon blest, with its fullness, their
zeal,
And turned threatened woe to the welcomest
weal.

On a rough, wooden bench, by a "dobey's" deep
door,

One eve, at the gloam, they saw Sandy once
more.

He trotted a red-headed babe on his knee,
And sang an old song, with great gusto and glee,
So this is the story, about as it ran,
Of the fiery trail of one Sandy McCann.

CHIQUITA, LA BONITA.

Great black eyes, with look so tender,
That they seem, almost, to weep;
Hand that's taper, brown and slender,
Shades them, peering up the steep,
From the "dobey" on the mesa,
Where the sun forever shines,

'Long the foothill, where the gazer
Sees amid the tangled vines
And the crooked manzanita,
Su Chiquita!
La bonita.

There's a little Mexic maiden,
Golden-haired and eyes of blue,
With the springtime flowers laden,
Climbing down from where they grew.
Dusky-haired and dark-eyed mother—
Though mayhap the question's bold—
Whence those eyes of some one other,
Whence the shining locks of gold?
Tell me, handsome Josepheta,
Of Chiquita,
La bonita.

Ah! I see yon caballero,
Riding thither down the trail—
Now he lifts his broad sombrero,
Shouts the Saxon's hearty hail,
And the flax-haired caballero
Has Chiquita's eyes of blue,
Shaded by his slouch sombrero
Pretty answer that is, too.
For the handsome Josepheta,
And Chiquita,
La bonita.

MY MOTHER'S WEDDING RING.

I remember when that circlet
Was a heavy golden band,
And how chastely rich it shone upon
Her plump and pretty hand.
As boy and man, I've often seen
Pure gems, serene and rare,
Gleam brightly on the same dear hand,
So tender, true and fair.

Those jewels, like the fleeting joys
That come, and glow, and go,
With all of Fortune's transient gifts,
And many a weighing woe,
Have gone, as go all friends and days,
With every hope or care :
But still the plain gold wedding ring
Shines true and faithful there.

Those dear, old hands are trembling now
Beneath the weight of years
And fragile, thin, has grown the band
That linked her joys and tears,
But to a loving, grateful son
There is no blessed thing
In all the world so holy as
His mother's wedding ring.

THE POET KING.

A quiet man, of gentle face,
Yet noble mien and courtly grace,
 To need and sorrow wed ;
For lack of gold his worth untold,
And jealous Fame speaks not his name,
 But waits till he is dead.

He sat beside a limpid stream
And saw its lucent waters gleam
 In jewels rich and rare ;
And in the hue of Heaven's blue
An angel face of gentle grace
 Was sweetly mirrored there.

He saw the flowers bloom and blush
From cordial morn till evening's hush,
 And listened to the lay
Of cooing dove, so full of love,
And drank the breeze that kissed the trees,
 In happy, hoyden play.

He lived in contemplation high,
Of all the glories of the sky,
 And sweetest lessons took
From earth and air ; the bright and fair
Of every place and age and race ;
 And read from Nature's book.

And now he sits upon a throne,
A monarch in a realm, his own,
And holds the universe
Within his grasp, with tender clasp,
A regal king with soul to sing,
But stript of scrip and purse.

Now list the music of his shell,
And hear his raptured accents tell
Of pure and noble things,
With minstrel's art and poet's heart,
He fills the bowl that soothes the soul,
And plays upon its strings.

THE COMING MASTER.

I sit upon my vine-clad porch,
'Tis summer's ardent weather,
And watch the breezes toying with
The thistle's downy feather.
My once brown hair is white as snow,
My hands are thin and wrinkled,
But better eyes have never yet
In such an old head twinkled.

A mile away, and up the road,
I see a horseman riding ;

He's handsome, even thus afar,
His noble beast bestriding ;
I see my daughter's tender look,
As wistfully she gazes,
And mother watching, 'neath her lids,
The blush the rider raises.

That gallant horseman coming here,
So often at sun-setting,
And mother's anxious looks with tears
That oft her cheeks are wetting,
Are signs to me, that, growing old,
Some day I will awaken
To find my place, as master here,
By that young horseman taken.

CANDO.

Cando, the boy, was poet, heaven-born,
For in his young life's fair and rosy morn
The melodies of forest, hill and dale,
The low, sweet song of wooing nightingale,
The stillicide of snow and sleet and rain,
The saucy echo's mocking, wild refrain,
The buzzing of the honey-laden bees
Among the bloom of peach and apple trees,
And music from all nature softly stole
To sweep the tuneful wind-harp of his soul.

He climbed the mountain side, and saw the sea
Come marching in to kiss the monarch's knee,
And, in its slow and undulant retreat,
Spread out its ermine carpets at his feet.
The fair, the good, the beautiful and true
Were to his rhythmic life poetic dew ;
Fair Genius lent her brightest lamp to light
His every step and bless his gladdened sight.
And Cando sang in strong, ecstatic song,
Of what he saw and heard, the whole day long.

Thus as he sang, at every rounded pause
His playmates clapped their rapturous applause,
Till fierce Ambition seized the poet boy
And stole away his adolescent joy.
Onward to manhood, hand in hand with fame,
Rushed Cando ; and the glory of his name
Rang through the State, borne on the cadent
breeze

'Mid loud huzzas, and then across the seas ;
Till in all lands, on every babbling tongue,
The wonder of his dazzling fame was sung.

Mellow and rich, from his enraptured shell,
Glowing and strong, the sounding numbers fell ;
He tuned no more a gentle harp to win
The plaudits of his youthful kith and kin,
But eager sought the tribute and acclaim

Of them of high and mighty name and fame,
'Till strong he stood, in glory and command,
And on a throne, magnificent and grand,
Young Cando sat and gazed above the crowd,
A monarch high, and laurel-crowned, and proud.

From distance dim, beyond the mighty throng,
Came faintly now the reaper's harvest song.
No more heard he the loving voice of home.
The tinkling herd-bell in the soft'ning gloam,
And lusty crow of doughty chanticleer
Were sounds too far for Cando's kingly ear.
Fame's vibrant tongue had 'whelmed the homely
 strains

Of Love's dear song and lullaby's refrains—
He lived to learn that grand exalted state
To lowly born is mockery of Fate.

A MODERN TEMPLE.

Not many short and fleeting years,
With all their hopes, and joys, and fears,
Have marched unhalting to the dead,
With steady, stern and silent tread,
Since o'er the hills and valleys here
The red man chased the panting deer,
And by the dark Missouri's tide
The warrior wooed his dusky bride ;

Not long ago, where now we stand,
With blessings rich, on every hand
The war-whoop through the forest rang,
Among the pines the wild winds sang ;
The screams of eagles in the air
Met echo in the gray wolf's lair ;
The bison, with his shaggy mane,
Grazed, all unharmed, upon the plain ;
The paddle of the light canoe
Flashed where the water-lilies grew ;
In Nature's garb the land was drest,
From mountain's foot to craggy crest,
And all was fresh, untouched and wild,
The free home of the forest child.

But soon, from toward the rising sun,
Was heard the white man's axe and gun ;
The forest bowed before his hand,
And as a garden bloomed the land ;
The ploughshare turned the virgin soil,
And rich rewards repaid the toil
Of every hardy pioneer
Who built his humble cabin here.
Fair cities decked the boundless west,
And here, the fairest and the best
Sprang up as if the builder's arm
Was aided by a magic charm,
And soon o'er hill, and vale and stream,

Was heard the wild and startling scream
Of swiftly-flying, fire-fed steed,
Dashing along at wondrous speed,
And scattering here, far and near,
Wealth and strength in his proud career ;
And thus, among the gray foot-hills,
Spires and homes, and shops and mills
Have risen as though genii hands
Had wrought where this fair city stands.

The rarest of the glist'ning gems
That deck the city's brow—
The brightest in her diadem,
Is this we're setting now ;
And he who gave this temple name,
Shall crown the beauteous queen,
And coming years shall sing his fame
And keep his memory green.

Each lovely Muse, who has a place
Within this temple grand,
His dreams and waking thoughts shall
grace,
And bless his open hand ;
For 'neath the sun, no fairer shrine,
Since Delphi, lost so long,
Was ever lifted to the Nine
Of Art, and Soul, and Song.

'Neath this broad dome, night after night,
For many a coming year—
'Neath all the golden, dazzling light,
From yon bright chandelier—
Shall come the man, the maid, the dame,
To drink from Pleasure's cup,
And see the actor strive for fame,
And hold the mirror up.

The walking thoughts of Avon's bard,
His hero, king and clown,
His guileless maid, and bearded pard,
And monk, in cowl and gown,
Shall often picture, on this stage,
The passions, loves and hates,
Of every nation, land and age
Outside the pearly gates.

The soldier, lady-love and king,
Who came at Bulwer's call,
Shall make their gallant speeches ring
And echo through this hall;
And birds of song their notes shall trill
'Mid orange groves and palms,
And every heart shall feel the thrill
Of music's potent charms.

Here England's pursy knight shall wince
Before the Windsor fays,
And Denmark's melancholy prince
Shall call his mimic plays,
And handle Yorick's fleshless pate,
And break Ophelia's heart,
And taming handsome, shrewish Kate,
Petruchio 'll play his part.

Here Lear, "every inch a king,"
Shall wear his monstrous woes,
And Juliet to her lover cling
Till death's releasing throes ;
Macbeth shall rue his murd'rous deeds
In crime's entangling mesh,
And Shylock, with revengeful greed,
Demand his pound of flesh.

And hunchback Richard, cruel, vile
Shall meet his Richmond here,
And on great Cæsar's fun'ral pile
Shall fall the Roman tear.
The jealous Moor shall send above
Sweet Desdemona's soul,
And Pauline prove that woman's love
Outweighs the power of gold.

Bright tears of joy shall dim the eye
For darling Jessie Brown,
Who hears, while others 'round her die,
The welcome slogan's sound.
Here poor old Rip shall totter in
To seek his little cot,
And find how, in Life's rush and din,
We are so soon forgot.

The earth, the sky, the boundless sea,
And every race and age,
Before these scenes shall gathered be
Upon this spacious stage.
Here Pleasure with her smiles shall bring
Surcease from daily cares,
And dullen Sorrow's sharpened sting,
And lift the woe she bears.

CASTELAR.

'Tis bitter to love her thus, he said ;
'Tis bitter that she loves me.
'Twere better to go where death hath led,
Where war is cruel, and blood is shed—
Far better than thus to be.

She hath a lord of her own—is wed—
Forsooth a man of low degree,
But many a league of land outspread,
He holds by a fief, inherited,
And a vassal tenantry.

I have a fief; 'tis in my hand,
A blade that did never rust,
And east and west in every land,
I held my own, with the trusty brand,
But now it must sheathe in dust.

Why do I linger about her gates?
I seldom see her, alas!
And who but a laggard mopes and waits
By the window the wan moon tessellates
To see her shadow pass?

The gold of her hair has tangled me,
Yet I have never loved gold.
The white of her throat, and the ivory
Of her bosom, chained me in ecstasy
When her lips the secret told.

I envy the lily upon her breast,
The rose in her shining hair;
I chide the sun who lags in the west;
I wait in the garden she loves the best—
She promised to meet me there.

I held her close in my arms last night ;
 Oh, the pain of stolen bliss !
She checked me with grief that was half delight,
The loves that were wrong, the hearts that were
 right,
Clung close in that pleading kiss.

Her lord is brawny and strong of arm,
 But comely and kind, men say ;
The brute that is in him may take alarm,
When he knows her heart with its depth of calm
 Has passed forever away.

Why tarries she yet ? 'Tis very late,
 And the night-bird bodeth ill ;
But hist ! I hear by the oaken stair,
Loud angry words—a cry of despair,
 Ah, God ! Now all is still.

I knew no bars, I knew no bolts,
 I knew no doors of oak,
I traversed the stairs and sounding floors ;
The chambers were closed—the great carved
 doors
Fell to a thunder-stroke.

Oh, rose ! Oh, lily ! Oh, poor white dove ;
 And the blood-stain on her breast,

And the parting lips still quivering—
Great God, I heard rude laughter ring,
By the cross, I stand confessed.

By the rood, I saw his brutal bulk
Stand midway in the door,
'Twas hard to slay so strong a man,
But I had slain the Saracen—
And her blood cried from the floor.

Little may vulgar strength avail
'Gainst arm that's nerved with steel;
He lies at the foot of a carven knight—
And I—I kissed her lips "Good night."
Good night! All peace, all rest go hence;
Good night to all but penitence.

RENAISSANCE.

'T was in the fairest season of the year,
That comes to where the yellow Tiber flows
Southward, among Italia's sunlit hills,
And when the sweetest bloom of Latium
blows,
With staff and dog I strolled along the streets,
Then out, and far away from modern Rome

Adown a fruit-tree shaded road that led
Beside the walls of many a lordly home;
Then on to Tusculum, the place where lie
The moss-grown ruins of the gleaming pile
That great Lucullus bravely built, ere yet
The gentle Nazarene, with God's sweet smile,
Had come to bless, and save the world, and die.

I wandered 'mid the crumbling walls, and mused
Upon the scenes that, centuries ago,
Had been enacted there in luxury,
And of the wealth and splendor, and the flow
Of wit and wine among the Roman lords;
Of beauties of the time, in robes that clung
In graceful folds about their faultless forms;
The singers, and the dulcet songs they sung,
Where now the lizard and the winking toad
Lived undisturbed, and vapors damp and dank
Arose from rotting weeds and scum-hid pools,
And where the gliding snakes, white bleached
and lank,
Slid in and out, in this their foul abode.

Akimbo, 'mid the ruins, here and there,
Stood broken marble columns, 'gainst the
walls,
And, tumbled from their niches, statues lay,
Chipped and defaced, along the weed-grown
halls.

Upon a mound of crumbled stone, I spread
My mantle out, and, half reclining there,
Petted the dog, and fed him from my pouch,
Then, drowsed by the warm and sluggish air,
Fell fast asleep, my dumb friend guarding me.
In fantasy of dreams I saw and heard
Some strange and pleasing things of long ago,
And memory caught and treasured every word
And sign, of that ecstatic reverie.

The white walls of the villa stood again,
As high and clean as in the days before
Decay's first touch had come to start the work
Of ruin, and to break and topple o'er
The towers tall, and tear the facades down.

The breath of summer odors floated through
The halls and corridors, and fountains sprayed
Cool waters on the tropic plants that grew
About their bases, and redoled the air

With rich perfumes, the scent of gaudy bloom
Half hid beneath the foliage darkly green,
And silken curtains from far Asia's loom,
In graceful drapings screened the portals there.

Yet silence reigned, save the soft sighs of winds
That rustled the rich hangings of the walls,
And gently played, in listless, wanton mood,
Where flowers bloomed within the frescoed halls.

Deserted of all living things, an air
Of mystery dim, as in cathedral aisles,
Pervaded all, and ghostly shadows fell
Athwart the bolts of light from day's bright
smiles
That shot in long and golden lances through
The high and latticed transoms of the doors.
Then day bowed low before the sable plume
Of night that laid her moonbeams on the
floors,
And lent the shimmering light a softer hue.

The statues stood again, upright, of gods,
Of satyrs and of nymphs, within the place,
And soon a babel 'rose of ancient tongues ;
A revel of a Pantheistic race.
Within an alcove, near to me, I heard
A gross old bacchant tell, with laugh and
sigh,
A sweet young naiad, of a time one night
When Horace with his Lesbia, drew nigh
To him, and in his shadow kissed the girl,
And wound his arm about her waist, and held
Her head upon his breast, while breathing low
The music of his poesy that welled
Like silver fount, and pure as Oman pearl.

"Think thou of that," he said, "and yet, per-
force,

I stood as calm as marble statues must,
But never will my memory lose the scene
Till all of us have crumbled into dust.
The Phrygian king, when standing to his lips
In waters cool, with fruits above him hung,
Dying of thirst and hunger, did not feel
Such agony as then my spirit wrung.
Oft when Lucullus gave a brilliant feast,
A guest came near this marble form of mine,
Goblet in hand, and I, a bacchant too,
Could catch the fragrant odor of the wine,
And think'st thou not Tantalus suffered least?"

And other busts and statues held converse,
Of poets, wits and sages, of the day
When Rome sat proud upon her seven hills,
And o'er the world, as mistress, held her
sway;
How at the sumptuous feasts within those halls,
When rich Lucullus, wealthy from the spoil
Of eastern victories, about him held—
Far from the city's din and mad turmoil—
The beauty and the chivalry of earth.
They spoke of grand Mæcenæ, who was
friend
To young Lucretius, Virgil, and the rest,
Whose rich and never-dying verse should lend
Immortal name to Roman deeds and worth.

I woke benumbed and chilled, for coming night
Had brought its added dampness, and I found
The dog had slain a score of venomed snakes,
And some lay writhing yet about the mound.
They'd sought to wound me as I slept, but that
True friend, the trusty dog, had met them
there,
Else, with my classic dream, I'd been undone
By reptiles that, like other cowards, dare
Smite but the helpless; and the vision taught
A lesson—that, perchance, is old—to me :
Build all you may, 'twill crumble into dust,
But love, and thought, and song, will ever be,
Though temples fall and riches come to naught.

EASTER LILIES AND EASTER BELLS.

Easter lilies and Easter bells;
Sweet the story their coming tells.
Faith and Hope, the lilies sing;
Peace unto the soul they bring.
High, Salvation's anthem swells
In the music of the bells.
Easter lilies and Easter bells;
Sweet the story their coming tells.

Pure and fair are the lilies of Easter ;
Stately, and queenly, and white.
Dulcet and deep are the bells that on Easter
Chime, with the coming of light,
The song and the story,
The love and the glory,
That live in the Kingdom of Right.

Out of the song and the fragrance of Easter,
Welcome, and blessed, and clear,
Cometh the risen and glorified Master,
Bringing glad words of good cheer,
And work in the garden
For them that seek pardon,
With peace for the sorrowing here.

Out in the meadows the lilies are blooming
And deep in the vales and dells
Brightly her sisters their sweet heads are lifting
Under the Easter-tide spells.
The spring birds are winging,
And gaily are singing,
The story the Magdalene tells.

Out in the morning came Mary the Magdalene—
Dew-damp of night in her hair ;
Weeping and pale, in the first morn of Easter,
Came she, faithfully, there.

And herein's the story—
Sweet Charity's glory—
The story the lilies declare.

Out of the chiming of soft bells at Easter ;
Out of the lily's perfume ;
Out of the riot of birds of the spring-time ;
Out of its myriad bloom
Comes ever the story
Of Christ's risen glory,
That mantles with promise the tomb.

TWO REVELS.

In revel long they drink and sing ;
The wassail bowl goes gayly round ;
From songs of love and war and chase
The ancient castle walls resound ;
The corridors and rafters ring
With echoes of the song and laugh ;
The chimney blazes glint the cups
That roystering gallants lift and quaff ;
They sing the deeds of men agone
And roar of comely lasses gay,
'Till reeling 'fore the goblet king
They prone beside the benches lay.

The sputtering lamps burn low and die ;
The wabbling blazes staggering chase
Across the scattered brands, that char
Within the ample fireplace ;
Deserted seems the ancient hall ;
Uncanny in the fallen gloom ;
And in the chill and dark that come
Is lost the heavy wassail fume.
The soughing winds sweep down the night ;
A sorry cur, in doleful howl,
Lends to the grewsome time his wail,
Responsive to a hooting owl.

But see ! Another light is there ;
Unearthly, pallid, is its glow,
And shadowy forms, in shimmering mail
Renew the song and wassail flow.
The song is hollow, soft and faint ;
The wine is thin, the toasts are old ;
And yet they prate of sires' deeds,
And clash the goblets that they hold.
Within the chimney-place a brand
Spurts out a long and ruddy glare,
And then these ghosts of men agone
Flee from the sight thus shown them there.

GIVE US, O! GOD, TO KNOW.

O, Great Jehovah! make it plain,
To them that look to Thee, and fain
 Would wisely worship at Thy feet;
O! give it us, great God, to know,
Why must fair Progress travail so,
 To bring forth what for right, is meet?
 O give us, God, to know!

Through Time, so far as mortal man,
May backward, straining, barely scan,
 He sees the road of Progress barred
By bigotry; and bending low,
The marplot deals his hindering blow,
 To check the forward march, and guard.
 Why? give us, God, to know.

The Nazarene, who came to give
Salvation, that the soul might live,
 Met lash, and spear, and cross, and thorn,
To bring Thy kingdom here below.
His way was made a way of woe.
 Why, thus to us, should peace be borne?
 O, give us, God, to know!

When in the throes of civil strife,
This young republic fought for life;

Behind the field a carping gang,
In right's pretense, a lurking foe,
Stood in the light of battle's glow,
And snarling, gnashed their fang to fang;
Why? give us, God, to know.

Ah, thus Thou movest, on the storm,
Thine awful wonders to perform;
And, humbly, we accept Thy way,
When, even now, the marplot's blow,
Would lay Columbia stunned and low.
That he, abashed, shall rue the day,
O, give us, God, to know.

“MISTLETOE.”

The poet-soul can see you, dear,
Lost in the maze of one short year,
Twining the mistletoe there.
Pensive and still, hopeful and true,
While memory sweetly sings to you,
Soft and low as a vesper prayer.

And one away on life's strong sea,
Where manhood's ship rides high and free,
Peers out across the surging tide,
And hears the same sweet song, my dear,
That comes to you adown the year—
Looks out to you, his star and guide.

He sees you in the brilliant glow
Of Christmas, 'neath the mistletoe,
And breathes the perfume of your hair ;
He loves you as he loved you when
He told you so, and kissed you then—
He sees you sitting, pensive there.

Then do not sigh again, my dear,
He loves you truly ; never fear
That aught may wile his heart from you.
He'll come with one more Christmas day
And kiss your anxious tears away
As sunshine does the dew.

From out the half-light—almost gloom—
That grays the presence of your room,
He'll bring the light of long ago,
And with your head upon his breast,
In love's delight, and peace, and rest,
He'll kiss you 'neath the mistletoe.

“BUFFALO BILL,” A KNIGHT OF THE WEST.

Who is this gallant cavalier that rides in from
the West ?
His horse, and gun, and trappings are the truest
and the best ;

He strides his noble thoroughbred with manly,
easy grace,
And sits the saddle like a sheik, and rides a rattling pace.
His hair falls white and long adown his shoulders strong and wide,
And all his bearing has the poise of manliness and pride.

A sovereign born and citizen of this fair Western land,
He rose among his fellows in the custom of command;
His boyhood heard the wailing that was echo of the yell
When the savage made the border seem the environs of hell;
With his dying father's spirit, his hunting-knife and gun,
He drove the bronze barbarians into the setting sun.

'Mong the willows by the river, on mesa, hill and plain,
They fell beneath his horses' hoofs, and 'fore his leaden rain.
Full well he wreaked his vengeance, and he blazed a Western path,

With the weapons of his prowess and the scor-
ing of his wrath.

From Missouri's murky waters to the white
Sierra's crest

This knightly man led dauntless men and empire
to the West.

To save the name, and legends, and traditions of
that land—

The wilderness that blossomed—and its story,
strange and grand,

To the wondering sight of millions, and to sing
its passing song,

He led toward the Orient his motley, nomad
throng,

With their singing, and their dancing, their
weapons and their ways,

Their riding and their fighting in their tribe to
tribe's affrays.

From the canyons of the mountains to the can-
yons of the deep,

And to where the Eastern nations close guard,
and jealous keep,

The monuments and tokens of their ancient rule
and state,

There the gallant Western chieftain rode among
the titled great,

A fellow-prince among the kings, a sovereign by
the right
Of honest manhood, bred beneath high Liberty's
clear light.

Where the altars of the Druids and ancient ab-
beys lie,
'Neath forest-covered ruins, marking centuries
gone by,
And in places that are cobwebbed with history
as old
As Britain's first traditions, lying deep in must
and mold,
There the chieftain and his riders went, and held
their hardy games
To plaudits of the multitudes, lords, kings, and
royal dames.

By the Tiber, 'neath the shadow of St. Peter's
lofty dome,
The mighty pile that canopies the hierarch of
Rome;
'Mid monuments and masonry, that, crumbling
in decay,
Teach the vanity of empire, how weak and fleet
its sway,
Here rode the knightly plainsman, and his cabal-
leros sang

Where oft, in centuries ago, acclaim to Cæsar
rang.

'Mong potentates and powers, in the cities of the
kings,
From where Mahomet's crescent across the Orient
swings
To where the North sea booms against old Den-
mark's rugged shores,
And back to where dear home-land opened wide
to him her doors,
Went and came the dashing horseman, and he
bore the banner high
That Freedom's heroes, for its weal, will dare,
and do, and die.

When by this mighty inland sea the great White
City gleamed
As radiant as mountain snows, the chieftain's
banners streamed
Above his wide encampment, and from every
clime and land
Came men to do him honor, and to grasp his
manly hand.
Even yet he leads his riders, and his lesson's
high and strong,
And so, saluting him, I sing this heartfelt, homely
song.

THE MODERN STEED.

In olden time my gran'dad's horse
 Stood patient at the gate,
And sometimes at a post, in town,
 Throughout the day, he'd wait ;
For gran'dad brooked no telling when
 'Twas time for him to go ;
And though 'twas said that he was fast,
 Times were when he was slow.

For politics, he had a turn—
 Not as a candidate—
And when he argued on that line
 The waiter waited late ;
And he believed his faithful horse
 Adopted all his creed,
And felt content to wait, all night,
 Bereft of drink and feed.

And though gran'dad was passing kind,
 'Twas plain upon its face
That often he forgot his horse
 And all the equine race.
Full many times—though but a boy—
 I felt for that old bay,
Who shivered many a stormy night,
 And sweltered many a day.

So, when I grew to be a man,
I vowed that I would be
More careful of the horse I rode
And faithfully served me;
No empty stomach should he have,
No flies should sting and goad
The goodly steed that I would have
To bear me on the road.

Today I ride with greater ease
Than gran'dad ever knew,
And make the miles along the road
As he could never do.
My horse is "tired," I'll admit,
The livelong day and night,
And yet his gait is just the same,
And he as fresh and bright.

He goes forever and a day,
And never wants a feed,
But often needs a rubbing down—
This tireless "tired" steed.
Yet, when my horse gets out of wind,
He stops right then and there,
And one must blow for such a horse
A fresh supply of air.

He runs with people who are wise,
Yet he is often green ;

Tho' sometimes black, he's always light ;
And it is daily seen
That though he goes the swiftest pace,
He cannot stand alone,
And though he'll live a hundred years,
He has no flesh or bone.

This horse will carry anyone,
Who first has learned to ride,
But down he lies with other folk ;
And, lest you think I've lied,
Pray let me, now, his tale unfold,
And close this double deal ;
I sing the steed that needs no feed,
The *fin de siecle* wheel.

THE STORM KING.

A ship sailed out on the open sea ;
'Twas gallant, strong and daring,
And it rode as brave as knight, and he
To win armorial bearing.
With heart that throbs in Titan form,
The great ship seemed as living,
And out of the calm and into the storm
It rode without misgiving.

Then came a roar of awful rage—
The bellow of the thunder ;
A monarch's challenge and his 'gage,
That broke the clouds asunder ;
And leapt his weapon from its sheath,
Its gleam the darkness bright'ning—
The shuddering ship sank dead beneath
A glittering blade of lightning.

BOHEMIA'S REST.

I met a gray old man, one night,
And he was worn and pale ;
Yet his heart was light,
And his eyes were bright
When he told his curious tale.

The old man's garb was worn to threads,
His hair and beard were rimed
With the frost of age,
And he seemed a sage,
With wisdom's lessons primed.

Bright Culture's garland crowned his brow,
And 'neath his humble guise
Was a noble heart ;
And the love of art
Shone from his twinkling eyes.

'Twas at the festal board that night,
Within Bohemia's shade,
The wassail bowl
Had warmed his soul
And edged his wit's keen blade.

"There was a time," he softly said,
"In the sweet-not-long-ago,
When I'd compare
In debonair
With all the best we know.

"The good Lord had been kind to me,
And bountiful were mine
His blessings fair,
With not a care,
And life was sparkling wine.

"In bright Bohemia's gladsome ways
I walked with genial souls,
And earth was mine,
In gladsome shine,
From tropics to the poles.

"I reveled with the gay and brave,
In mazes of delight,
And wore the braid
Of one fair maid
Won as a loyal knight.

- “ I went to war and flashed my sword,
In battle's garish blaze,
And won renown,
Aye, e'en a crown—
The soldier's wreath of bays.
- “ I stood within the forum then,
And won the strong applause
Of gallant men
And trenchant pen,
For that I'd won a cause.
- “ With health and wealth and high emprise,
I gave to others fame ;
By poet's art
I thrilled the heart,
And earned exalted name.
- “ With hand on lever of the press
I built a city where
Primeval stood
A mighty wood
And cougars had their lair.
- “ I sent to legislative halls
A knavish parvenu,
Who, overfed
On what I'd said,
A monstrous patron grew.

- “ That sculptor of the olden time,
Who with a godlike art
Carved into life
A minx of strife,
Who broke his loving heart,
- “ Did better far than this, for he
Could proudly say, at least :
‘ Its beauty’s there ;
’Tis strong and fair’—
My mold was but a beast.
- “ The city grew at such a pace
That I was lost therein ;
The smallest clown
Within the town
Would pass me with a grin.
- “ My spirit, enterprise and zeal
Were all forgotten, quite,
And men, for self,
To gather pelf
Had squeezed me out of sight.
- “ But here, within these classic halls,
With loving friends I meet,
In royal fete
The ‘ third estate,’
In art and soul’s retreat.”

A GENTLEMAN.

He could not be so poor that he would hate the
rich,

Nor yet so rich that he despised the poor.

He is so brave and just, that not a turn nor
hitch,

In all of fortune's winding way, could lure
Him to an act or thought of vile ingratitude.

He's true unto himself, and thus to every man,
And has that courage, high, and grand, and
strong,

That comes with kindness, and with honor leads
the van

To help the right, and sternly punish wrong;
To strip injustice till it shivers, shamed and
nude.

He seeks the culture that, refining, gives a grace
And comfort to himself and those around;

He has not ostentation, nor would he abase
Himself to thus become a monarch crowned.

Clean comes his thought, and from his hand
a brother's grip.

He comes from anywhere — aye, e'en from
Nazareth —

From north and south, and from the east and
west ;
He comes as comes the cool and grateful breeze's
breath.
He need not be an angel from the blest,
He might be, thus, too good for man's com-
panionship.

DON'T SAW YOURSELF OFF OF A
LIMB.

There was a young man who climbed up a tree,
And he was as healthy as healthy could be ;
But now he's a sight that is sorry to see,
And, oh, I would hate to be him !

He was pruning the tree to encourage its health,
To make it bear better, and swell his own wealth,
But sorrow came to him, wolf-like in its stealth,
When he sawed himself off of a limb.

The man who is doing quite well at his trade,
Should always stick to it, and not be afraid
That Fortune, the fickle and fussy old jade,
Can injure his chance in the swim.

But when he lets go what he knows how to do,
And jumps into something that's too very new,

He finds himself done in a pretty hot stew—
He has sawed himself off of a limb.

It pays to be honest, and active, and true ;
To pay unto Cæsar whatever's his due ;
And always on honor to tighten your clew,
Then do what you do with a vim.

But if ever you make with your good name a
slip ;
On every-day decency let go your grip,
You'll find yourself flat on the devil's black hip—
You have sawed yourself off of a limb.

The man who is healthy and wealthy, if wise,
Will never the poor and the humble despise ;
For his money might feather, take wings and
arise,
And drop him to earth with a bim !

And then when he feels of his bruises and breaks
And thinks of the number and sort of mistakes
A fool with a pile that's too big for him makes,
He knows he's sawed off of a limb.

Be true to yourself, and as certain as fate,
You'll always be going a good winning gait,
And blessings will fall on your frosty old pate
When age makes your peepers grow dim.

And then at the end of your life's little span
You'll smile at the way things promise to pan,
And die a contented and happy old man,
Who was never sawed off of a limb.

ONE MORE VALENTINE.

Long I've told you, once a year,
 Sweet, my valentine,
How I've loved you, honey, dear,
 How for you I pine.
I have rhymed you every way ;
 Called you Columbine,
Swore you were my night and day,
 Asked you to be mine,
 Sweet, my valentine.

And I've called those lasses up—
 All the Muses, Nine ;
Had them with me drink and sup,
 Sweet, my valentine ;
Begged them help me, little one,
 At the nuts and wine,
Write a song that, when 'twas done,
 Love would through it shine,
 For my valentine.

By the altar of thy beauty ;
 At thy virgin shrine,
Have I knelt in loyal duty,
 Praying you'd be mine ;
And I've sworn the form of Hebe
 Was not so divine,

Nor had she, fair Queen of Sheba,
Near such grace as thine,
Sweet, my valentine.

Once a year, I've sent you, darling,
Such a song and sign ;
Made your voice outvie the starling ;
Lips like ruby wine.
Now, I'd make this one day all days,
And, sweet valentine,
Ask you to be my loved one always,
Mine, and only mine ;
My own valentine.

Yes, I wish all intervening
Days could brightly shine
On our love, and ever meaning,
Just one valentine,
So that thus 'twill be forever,
Love of mine and thine
Shall grow closer yet together,
Clinging as a vine,
Sweet, my valentine.

ON THE SUMMER SEA.

I have a little sweetheart, a dear, winsome
 beauty,
 Who lives by the lakeside, but where, I'll
 not tell.
I owe her my fealty, my best love and duty,
 And the vows I have made her I'll keep
 true and well ;
As truly as lovers in days of old story,
 When knights were the boldest and bar-
 ons were strong ;
Her love is my day-star, my pride and my
 glory,
 And in its sweet service I sing her this
 song.

There is many a maiden whose smiles I
 still cherish,
 Whose laugh was as music the sweetest
 to me,
Whose friendship I hold where it never
 shall perish,
 But none have I loved like this maid of
 the sea.
She comes to me flying across the white
 riftings

Of sands by the lakeside, to where, in
my boat
I am waiting the lassie, and then we go
drifting,
The happiest lovers on earth or afloat.

From her hair, where the sunlight so cheer-
ily dances
To feet that are dimpled, and shapely,
and bare
My love is my life, and its worth she
enhances
By her's that's so artless, and honest,
and rare.

I'm sure 'twould be happiness, true and
unfailing,
If that pretty maiden could always with
me,
Go loving and laughing, and singing and
sailing,
Through all of my journey on Life's
changeable sea.

BE FAIR AND JUST, MY SON.

When all the laws and proverbs known to man,
And made to guide him in the right,
Are blent, and sublimated into one,
Shall come, as bright as God's white light,
"Be fair and just, my son."

Therein lies faith, and charity, and hope,
With honor, truth, and love, and peace;
In that may good be ever nobly done;
It brings to human joy, increase.
Be fair and just, my son.

Rise high above the scrambling mob, that stoops
To gather gear, that comes by greed.
Enough, and some to spare, is better won
As industry and honor's meed.
Be fair and just, my son.

That grim misfortunes often lash the best,
As with the chastening rod, 'tis true;
But wrong, though long its course may smoothly
run,
Will meet, at last, its dire due.
Be fair and just, my son.

So taught the gentle Nazarene, and so
The greatest men the world has known,

From Moses, Orange, and our Washington
And Lincoln, hath the precept shone :
 “ Be fair and just, my son.”

It lifts the soul and purifies the heart
 'Twould make the world a paradise ;
'Twould end all war and silence every gun ;
 Virtue would reign above dark vice.
 Be fair and just, my son.

GO EASY.

An old gray man on an old gray horse
 Came riding down the lane ;
Said the old gray man to the old gray horse :
 “ Your gait gives me a pain.”

Said the old gray horse to the old gray man :
 “ You've grown so plaguey thin,
You don't know when your seat is soft,
 And that's the fix you're in.”

“ I'll teach you better talk than that,”
 Said the old gray man, quite huff ;
And he beat that old gray horse full hard
 With his stick so long and tough.

The old gray horse reared up in front,
And then kicked up behind ;
The old gray man fell off in the mud,
And much distraught in mind.

Said the old gray horse to the old gray man,
With a long and horsey smile :
“ You’ll find that seat full soft enough,”
And he trotted many a mile.

The old gray man walked home that night,
The horse no supper got.
They growled no more from thence, I ween,
But lived in peace, I wot.

TWO DEAD.

’Tis pitiful to see a man at life’s mid-day,
Dead and undone, a lump of pallid helpless clay ;
He that was strong and brave, and loving, and
alert,
Lost to his friends ; his heart and hand and art
inert.
And over this we weep and sigh and long repine ;
Above it, build a tomb and plant a mourning
vine.
Mayhap, in story he’s embalmed to keep him
near,

And all that may be done is done, to veil his
bier.

Aye, bitter 'tis, indeed, that men must pass
away,

And buried be in living hearts and in the clay.

'Tis pitiful to see a man at life's mid-day
With all ambition gone; the weak and nerveless
prey

Of baseless fears, or indolence; full well content
To have the shining days that God has kindly
sent,

Go trooping by, nor find amid them all, not one
In which some worthy work may worthily be
done;

Who caring not for all the duties men may owe
Each other here, reck's not of human weal or
woe.

'Tis better to be dead and buried out of sight
Than dead, and buried not; a useless, idle wight.

THE TIGER'S CUB.

The tiger's cub was gentle, and it played with a
little child;

Its feet were velvet cushions, and its brown eyes
meek and mild.

The changes came so softly that its playmate
had not seen
The cruel claws in velvet, and the brown eyes
glinting green.
The child is lying, mangled, in the fierce and
reeking jaws,
For the tiger's cub has torn him, 'neath his
velvet-hidden claws.

I knew a youth of strength and truth,
And mien of a manly man,
Who marched along, with laugh and song,
In Pleasure's troop and van.
High hope was his, and noble aim ;
He sealed a lover's vow,
And climbed the dazzling steeps of Fame,
Where Fortune kissed his brow.

The way was bright, his heart was light,
And friends by legion came
In joyous throng, to swell his song,
And echo his sounding fame.
They lifted high the bowl, and drank
His health in sparkling wine,
Amid the bloom of the primrose bank,
And under the shading vine.

In shade of vine, from lees of wine,
A mocking monster came,

And seized the boy, amid the joy
And lustre of his fame.
The wanton demon dashed the drink
With poverty and dread,
And drove the youth to ruin's brink—
The singing troop had fled.

With leers and limps, the comrade imps,
In howl, and grin, and yell,
Tore at his soul, his manhood stole,
And dipped him deep in hell.
'Mid horrors that no mortal tongue
Could ever tell aright,
They dragged his life and, screaming, flung
His honor into night.

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Its feet were velvet cushions, and its brown eyes
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The changes came so softly that its playmate
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The cruel claws in velvet, and the brown eyes
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The child is lying, mangled, in the fierce and
reeking jaws,
For the tiger's cub has torn him, 'neath the
velvet-hidden claws.

JIM MARLINSPIKE.

Jim Marlinspike was a castaway,
On a far-off island shore ;
He floated there on a banjo box,
And a shirt was all he wore—
If you should bar a startled look,
And a pain that then was his,
For too much damp had left with Jim
A touch of the rheumatiz.

But Jim was a man of "Tapley" stripe,
And when things worried him,
He always looked at the pleasant side,
For that was the way with Jim,
And so it gave him joy, indeed,
When on that lonely shore,
He found his banjo in the box—
He asked for nothing more.

Some would'er pined for a bite to eat,
Or a suit of hand-me-downs,
But Jim just played his old banjo,
And laughed at Fortune's frowns.
The trade winds played at hide-and-seek
With the skirt of Jim's brief shirt,
But he sat on a rock and played banjo,
And he played it, too, right peart.

The pine trees there were pine enough
For such a man as him ;
Not a soul on land, nor one on sea,
Was a'bothering much of Jim.
The most contented man on earth,
Or, eke upon the sea,
Was that same jack-tar, Marlinspike,
With his banjo on his knee.

Old Crusoe pined for lots of things
When in that selfsame fix ;
He wanted friendship, home, and such,
To Jim all these were " nix."
He'd never known where he was born,
And what's more, didn't care,
And friendship he had seemed to think
Was a thing that didn't wear.

Therefore he stayed and gaily played
To whales and little fish ;
And old Saint Tony never had
A crowd more to his wish.
At last one day, his G string broke,
And with that came a pain
That broke his heart, for now he thought,
He'd never play again.

So then he pined, from day to day,
A sorely troubled soul ;

How glad he'd given his very last shirt
To make the G string whole.
He pined for a place where he could buy
Another such a string;
But hope was lost and Jim sat down
His death song for to sing.

A tender-hearted monster heard
Poor Marlinspike's sad wail—
The great big mammal-fish that's called
The true and righteous whale;
And straight away his whaleship went,
Right down to Whatcom flats,
And swallowed there a gunny-sack,
Cramfull of all size cats.

The G cat and the B cat too,
Likewise the slender E,
And wire to make the big A strings,
A cargo full, took he,
And then he hied him fast away,
To Jim's lone island shore,
And threw his string-truck on the beach
And laughed till he was sore.

Now when Jim Marlinspike beheld
What this good whale had done
He knew that 'mong the mammal sort
A real friend he'd won.

He wiped his red and weeping eyes,
And tuned his shell once more,
And Jim is playing yet, I think,
Upon that island shore.

A MEMORY AND A TEAR.

'Tis noon of night, and from a long, lone walk,
I've come to sit me down and meditate;
To croon and ponder, musing with myself;
To mumble in an old man's piping way.

That walk had been a hard and weary one,
Had I been 'companied by other thoughts
Than those that held me as I strolled adown
The wintry street—the hushed and quiet street,
Save for the restless wind, that blowing light,
Listless and wanton, thro' the bare-armed trees,
Made music fitting to my reverie,
So deep, and reaching to the past,
That being once again a boy, my limbs
Forgot the years they've marched along beside
Since lusty youth, in roseate glow, was mine.

In all the years, since then, I've seen the world
On many sides, and felt its jagged points,
As rolling in swift motion, on its poles,

It grinds the face of those who do not wear
Protecting Fortune's mask, impierceable.

I've sat within the shade of orange groves,
And heard in low and sweet and witching strains,
Some far-off music, as of siren songs,
Weird-like, from wooded shores of placid lakes,
Soft o'er the listening waters steal along.

I've borne the cold of arctic heights, and dragged,
Half famished, o'er the sands of desert plains,
And strove in solitude among the wilds
And gloom of desolation lost.

I've stood upon a lonely isle, far out
Amid the sea, and yearning, hopeful, watched
The waste to catch a sight of saving sail,
And day by day saw, but with growing dread,
The crawling canyons of the deep upheave.

But in it all I've had a holy, sweet,
And blessed memory to 'bide with me—
My strong young manhood's first and cherished
love.

And here's a great and faithful tear; one lone,
True, tender friend, of bright and bygone years
That, some decades ago, held in their arms
The long-lost love that I beheld tonight,

So far away, and yet so vividly,
Adown life's wonder-sided vista dim.

Welcome thou art, my fellow mourner, here
Beside the grave of buried hopes ; welcome,
Thou sweet and pure good comforter of mine ;
And mayst thou come again some time, to me,
For with thee comes a gentle, tender touch
Of pity for Myself, that softeneth,
As with an angel's kind and soothing ways,
A heart that hath no other pain so sweet ;
A heart that crying, bleeding with it all,
Hugs the strong anguish, for the blessed joy
It gave, when that young love was all the world,
And heaven, so pure it was, and blissful.

HIS ANGEL SLEPT.

Fair of face and debonair ;
Unbound sheaves of shining hair ;
Open throated, winning eyes ;
Lives 'neath never-clouding skies :
Soul that's ever moulding art ;
True and brave, with tender heart ;
Takes the great world as it goes ;
Loves the pansy and the rose ;
 Finds in every flower honey ;
 Hates the miser and his money.

High of mind and clanly proud ;
Shrinks he from the rabble crowd ;
Shuns the herd and loves his friends ;
Scorns the truckling soul that bends ;
Holds the sparkling goblet high ;
Lowers it and drains it dry ;
Guardian angel of the boy
Watch with him through every joy ;
 Ward off dangers that environ ;
 Let thy wand be rod of iron.

'Mid the music and the bloom,
Soft caresses and perfume,
Where the fountains splash and play,
Where, though light, 'tis never day,
For the day is his in sleep ;
Dreaming dreams while reapers reap,
Poet-born, with fancy bright,
Plays and works he in the night ;
 With no passion mezzo-graded,
 All sun-bright or somber-shaded.

Cold the winter wind now blows,
Lying deep the winter snows ;
Hard and frozen is the way
Where he's wandering astray,
And the morning drives the dark
From the spot where, lying stark,

He who had been guarded well,
At the hand of demons fell—
Through the shadows came they creeping;
Worn, his angel guard was sleeping.

THE WOMAN OF THE MOON.

There's a portrait of a woman on the moon,
It is graven on the shining silver disc;
It's a face that has the tint of lily roon,
And the bas-relief's as cameo or bisque.
She's as handsome as a rose in early June,
This fair and lovely woman of the moon.

A mystery's this portrait on the moon
That was graven by the Master hand above;
'Tis a mystery as deep as ancient rune,
And perplexing as the woman that we love.
She is fairest in the autumn night's high noon,
This pure and lovely woman of the moon.

It was erst a man we pictured in the moon;
It is better that a woman should be there,
With the roses and the lilies 'round her strewn,
And the light of heaven, shining on her hair.
When the one we love is absent we may croon
To the lovely woman graven on the moon.

A TALISMAN.

What uses had he for all these—
This ring-locked, rusty bunch of keys?
Ah! this one closed his vault of wine;
And this one opened up the mine
From whence he took the store of thought
That here are in his writings wrought.
But this! Why, here, he held his life!
This was his latch-key, and his wife
Has thanked dear God to hear it turn.
Its place is 'mong the ashes in his urn.

CHICAGO.

AN EPIC.

The Visigoth and Vandal hordes that rushed
Across, in trampling force, and savage mood,
The breadth of ancient Europe's continent,
Trod lighter than the wild and ruthless brood,
That in fierce raid bore down from bleaker lands,
To sweep the mild Algonquin from the fields
Of fertile Illinois, that grateful teemed
In rich abundance, and whose lavish yields
Were noised afar. 'Twas thus the spoiler came
To lay, in blood, the savage victor's claim.

Beside the mighty inland sea, that laves
The northern shores and bounds of Illinois,
As stand, in fields, the fall-time shocks of corn,
So stood the wigwams of the Iroquois ;
And harbored in the river's sluggish mouth,
Lay rocking where the water-lilies grew,
And lightly on the stream, in huddled fleets,
And myriad, the Indian's bark canoe ;
A war-bent host in sullen camp was there,
And threatful as the couchant panther's glare.

Where erst the docile Inini had chased,
Through stream, and wood, and on the meadowed
plain,
The panting deer and shaggy buffalo ;
And where, amid the fields of waving grain,
Fed feathered flocks; where were content, and peace,
And happy homes, the fell invader swept.
The tranquil villages were razed to earth ;
Thousands were slain, and sore a nation wept.
Despoiled and driven forth, strong men were
cowed,
And down to dust a mighty people bowed.

Among the maidens of the Inini
Were none more beautiful in face and form
Than youthful Wat-chee-kee, whose loveliness
Outvied the western sky, when by the storm

It had been swept, leaving no trace of cloud
And when the setting sun had lit that space
In gold and crimson glory ; and the limbs
Of Wat-chee-kee were lithe and curved in grace ;
Light was her step as hunting cougar's tread ;
Her glowing eyes a star-bright luster shed.

Vanquished, the Inini watched from afar,
With listless soul, the orgies of his foe,
And saw him dance in revelry about
The flames that laid his looted dwelling low.
Then came fair Wat-chee-kee, of flashing eye,
Among the daunted warriors to plead,
Beseeching them to rise and strike while night
Lent aid, and deep caroused the foe in greed.
Yet sullen sat the broken Inini,
Engloomed and overcast as wintry sky.

Then turned the maiden to the women there,
With blazing words that begged them shame to
fight
The craven, miscalled braves. Up rose the squaws,
A host of armed amazons, bedight
In plumes and soldierly arrayed, to dash
Against the enemy. Wat-chee-kee led,
And seeing this, the men bestirred themselves.
So marched the motley band, with silent tread,

And crushed in deep defeat the Iroquois,
Who wildly fled the lands of Illinois.

Where raged the battle fiercest on that field ;
Amid the foremost, focal blaze of fight ;
In righteous anger for her people's wrongs,
The maid, with cheeks aglow, and eyes as bright
And gleaming as incessant lightnings are
Among the storm clouds of the night, was first ;
And as the nodding helmet of Navarre,
Her form shone where revenge could slake its thirst,
Thus, ere was heard the song of morning lark,
Proud victory kissed this Indian Joan of Arc.

The years, in stately decades, passed along ;
To gentle Peace, grim War had bent him low,
And in the horizon his sable plume
Had, northward, disappeared, and now the bow
Sped arrows only in the chase, or when
The youths and warriors, to match their craft,
At targets drove the whirring dart, and vied
To send afar, and high, the feathered shaft,
Fast filled the woof within the loom of fate,
Where now the Indian lover wooed his mate.

From far off lands, across the mighty sea,
Whose bosom bore the glowing orb of day,
That Great Manito sent to light the earth,

Came strange and pale-faced men, who sought a
way
To other lands behind the setting sun,
And far beyond the red men's furthest ken.
'Twas pearls, and gold, and precious stones, they
craved ;
And 'mong them came some pure and gallant men,
As brave Moreau, Perrot, and Joliet,
Tonti, La Salle, and pious Pere Marquette.

Beside the Calumet, a limpid stream,
Lay long encamped the vanguard of the host
That from the old world's teeming multitudes
Came hitherward, where stands the pride and boast
Of all the shining cities of the earth,
That live and flourish since the ancient day
When Rome sat on her seven clustered hills,
To hold, as mistress proud, her regal sway ;
And this was "Getchi-ka-go," in the song
Of Inini, "great, beautiful and strong."

To all the region of the Inini,
For France, and in her robber monarch's name,
Amid Te Deums loud, and by the cross
And churchly rite, the voyageurs laid claim.
Then came the hordes of monstrous greed and crime
From Europe's shores, and all their vices spread,
In vile contagion, 'mong the native tribes ;

Thus stalking Wrong, with hard and cruel tread,
Crushed low the tender blades of fair intent ;
Then savage whoop with victim's wail was blent.

Meantime the good Marquette and brave La Salle—
The one, religion's zealous devotee,
The other, blazing empire's rugged way—
Fought gallantly the fight, till fate's decree
Sent both, untimely, to a tragic end ;
La Salle beside the Mexic gulf laid low,
From ambush, by a vile assassin's hand ;
And Marquette, where Manistee's waters flow,
While homeward bound, to seek from pain
surcease,
A soldier in the holy war of peace.

Southward, along Lake Michigan's wild shores,
Deep silence reigns again, save when in fight
The warring natives meet, and weapons ply
That give, but dully forth, the sounds when might
Braves might, to strive upon the battlefield.
High up, the eagle, listless in the air,
Lies poised and motionless, on outstretched wing,
And safely sleeps the wolf beside his lair ;
Unharm'd on yonder plain the bison feeds,
And softly flow the waters 'mong the reeds.

But lo ! what wondrous sight is that away
Upon the swelling bosom of the lake ?

A big canoe, with wide and snow-white wings.
Let all that was so still and dull awake.
The Anglo-Saxon comes, and, faith, he bears
The key to treasure vaults—strong enterprise—
Before him hindrance fails, and where he halts
Resources yield, and throbbing cities rise.
Columbia sends a hardy host, and bold,
To raze, to build, to conquer and to hold.

So here arose the walls of Dearborn fort,
And close about, the hopeful pioneer
His cabin built, and earnest laid his plans
For fortune, health, increase and goodly cheer.
A village grew apace, and promise shone
Effulgent where the wilderness had stood ;
Here traffic blazed its never-halting way,
And fell before the axe the ancient wood ;
The plowshare turned the deep and virgin soil,
And rich reward marched side by side with toil.

But ever 'gainst enlightenment's advance,
Stands, stubborn, stern and threatening, a foe ;
The best must always fight its opening way,
And gain its goal through trial, hate and woe.
Beside the just and noble ones, who came
To civilize the western wilds and raise
The structure of exalted state, were knaves
Of every mean degree, and shape, and phase,

Whose vile misdeeds, for paltry pelf and gain,
Brought ravage, wreck, and havoc's woeful train.

'Twas thus, once more, the savage swarms uprose,
By famed and cruel young Tecumseh led,
And through the region of the northern lakes
A ruthless war its desolation spread.
By treachery and deep deceit, beguiled,
To yield the weakened fort, in ambush fell
The Dearborn garrison, and at the spot
That's marked today by bronze, with horrid yell
The red fiends dashed upon the helpless train,
And crimson ran Chicago's sands again.

With fury unrestrained the savage plied
The blazing brand, the tomahawk and knife,
And low in ashes fell the fane of Hope,
Where somber hung the angry clouds of strife.
But kind and gentle Peace returned, and now,
From far across the seas, for Britain's arm
Had erst been raised in harsh and allied might,
With savages, to work the woeful harm.
Again, and stronger, rose Fort Dearborn's walls,
And progress lifted high its stately halls.

But years there were of struggle, toil and wait ;
Then, in its fullness, comes the mighty tide
That sweeps away the wreckage of the past ;
Upon its breast the ships of triumph ride ;

On winged heel the god of commerce flies
To where another western star has dawned
Amid the union's galaxy, and here,
As from a wave of his caducean wand,
A gem within a gem, Chicago, gleams,
As sparks that glint where brightest sunshine
streams.

Majestic as the mountains are, that stand
In Titan ranks, snow-helmeted, and fold
A cloak of cloud about their rugged forms;
Strong as a bannered army is, and bold
As honor dares to be, Chicago grew;
Her name was heralded abroad as one
Whose word is truth, and stronger than a bond;
And 'mong the greatest cities 'neath the sun
She held exalted place. Hers was the way
Of empire, and she strode with regal sway.

Where Nature's God had most sublimely wrought;
In all the west a glory and a boast;
A regnant queen and radiant she stood,
Her legions loyal and a hardy host.
Her realm was Liberty's abiding place;
Upbuilt her altars were to God alone;
To freedom were her faithful people vowed;
Her rule was law, and right her only throne.
Bright on her brow the star of Fortune beamed;
Full high advanced, her graceful banner stream'd.

'Twas thus that when the angry cloud of war
 Stood lurid in the sky, but ere it swept
In raging storm across the troubled land,
 And from its breast red battle's lightning leapt,
In fair Chicago's halls the council met
 That chose, to be the nation's head and guide,
A gaunt and humble man, who, godlike, rose
 To highest deeds, and, martyred, meekly died.
 His harshest foe begrudges not his fame,
 And written high is Lincoln's deathless name.

In blind and howling fury—as the sea,
 That, tempest-driven, beats its dragon wing
Against the time-hewn cliffs and glaciated walls
 Of some bleak northern coast, and, bellowing,
Roars its anger to the skies—so beat
 The storm of civil war, in lashing rage,
Against the young republic's battlements,
 And shook the fabric, as when Titans wage
 Terrific strife, and in their wrestlings jolt
 The rock-ribbed hills as by a thunderbolt.

Then to the fore, in eager, bristling lines,
 Chicago's steel-crowned columns swung along ;
A great and grim array of fighting men,
 And singing freedom's ringing battle song.
Before the red-breathed cannon's brazen mouth,
 That belched torn death in hot and hurtling shot ;

Before the leaden hail of musketry,
Onward they bravely bent, and faltered not,
But faced war's smiting gusts and proudly sang
A hymn of glory when the peace bells rang.

But they, and all their armed comrades, met
A gallant foe, full worthy of their steel.
It was as in the valiant times of old,
When Greek joined Greek ; for true were they, and
leal—

Those southern souls—to what they deemed the right,
And nobly fought for cause, for home and hearth ;
'Twas Anglo-Saxon lustihood that clashed,
'Mong men of equal nerve, and brawn, and birth.
Long and relentless waged the awful strife,
And rippling flowed the ruddy tide of life.

Back to the peaceful callings they had left—
When war was done—came, heartfully, the men
That death had missed. Back to the forge and bench,
The busy mart, the easel and the pen.
The great and robust city grew apace,
Beneath the smiles and promisings of peace ;
Her people thrived, and hopeful were, as those
That Jason led to seek "The Golden Fleece."
The world, admiring, watched her high emprise,
And, wond'ring, saw her noble structures rise.

Of rich success almost a decade passed,
When fell disaster, red and roaring, came,
And prone, Chicago, torn and ravaged, lay,
Where stalked the monstrous monarch of the
Flame.

Along the fire despot's cindering march,
And where beneath his white-hot, iron heel,
Huge walls of steel and stone are crushed, his imps
And myrmidons before him dance and reel,
And hiss and scream in devilish, ribald play;
With blazing besoms sweeping homes away.

In league with havoc, rush the wanton winds,
That drive about destruction's burning rain,
And shriek in hoarse discordance with the flames
That screech like fiends infernal and insane,
Till miles and miles of torrid fury boil;
A sea of hell upon the sodden earth;
A molten belt across the city lay,
And glowing as Gehenna's candent hearth.
Along the shores of this plutonic sea
Howl packs of human wolves, in beastly glee

In crumbling ruin lay Chicago's halls,
Her temples and her monuments of art,
The homes of rich and poor, of pure and vile,
The palace and the hut, the merchant's mart;
Her churches, and the gilded dens of vice;

Her towers toppled and her facades razed ;
A noble city crushed and overthrown ;
Her people stunned and all the world amazed.
In black and ashen wreck the work of years
Had gone, and hope was almost drowned in tears.

In high resolve and self-reliant mien,
From out the smoking ruin, stanch and strong,
Chicago's dauntless spirit rose again,
And ere the embers cooled, her eager throng
Of enterprising men were laying, deep,
The firm foundations of her future state.
Meanwhile, her sister cities helpful came,
With gracious deeds the gods might emulate.
Then mantled on her face a grateful glow,
And bright as sunshine on the leveled snow.

Great and majestic, grander than before ;
In rare proportions lifted, chaste and strong,
Chicago's palaces of trade and art,
Exalted rose, a glory and a song,
Her avenues and parks, her towered halls,
Her cottages and courts, her princely homes,
Her mills, her statues and her monuments,
Her arched arcades and welkin-reaching domes—
All these, and more, are pledges of her worth,
As queen among the cities of the earth.

Through every land and clime beneath the sun ;
From torrid belt to where the frozen zones
Engirt the earth, in fair Columbia's name,
Chicago called, to subjects and to thrones,
And craved that for a season they should come,
To honor him who braved the unknown sea,
And found a land where men have learned to know
Their human rights, and knowing them are free ;
To celebrate the time when fate unfurled
Advancement's banner in the western world.

Thus nations came and brought their handiwork ;
Their wondrous arts, their learning and their
thought ;
Their ways, their manners and their mysteries,
And with these sovereign states, they freely wrought
To build the great White City, marvelous
And grand, that as a vision came and went,
Its dazzling beauty flashed in lucent light
Upon the soul, and then with echo blent.
'Twas there ! 'Tis gone ! It did not only seem,
Yet now 'tis but a memory and a dream.

Man stood surprised, bewildered and amazed,
Amid the work that he himself had done ;
Spellbound and marveling, in awe he gazed—
Delighted yet—upon the victory won.
The world was here, in every shade and phase ;

Its substance and its symmetry ; and sight
Had never met a fairer scene than that.

'Twas beauty's arm thrust from a robe of light.
Strong Science found sweet Poesy and wooed,
And she his way with fragrant bloom bestrewed.

Captive was nature made ; for on the sands
Sweet flowers bloomed, amid the verdant grass ;
A forest on the plain arose, and deep
Ran limpid waters where the dark morass
Had reeked its vapors, foul, for centuries ;
Great shining palaces sprang up, and gleamed
In white and dazzling splendor, and the spray
Of fountains, iridescent, flashed and beamed,
Where erst the slimy snake and winking toad,
By scum-hid pools, had held their foul abode.

All ranks and races met ; the prince and clown
In easy fellowship ; and here began,
Amid the harmonies of art and skill,
A new and better brotherhood of man.
Religions, that have ever been at war—
Of grim intolerance the type and seal—
Conferred in cordial terms. All rivalry
Was kind, and seemed to wish the common weal.
Music and jangle, sounding side by side,
By chisel, brush and pen were glorified.

Chicago's nerve, her forcefulness and might,
Her high ambition and her queenly grace,
Were elements that guided all; and thus
She won clear title to the stately place
That trial, triumph, weal and woe have wrought
To test her worthiness. So she will stand,
Through ages, strong and brave, true to the right,
Hopeful and free, magnificent and grand.
Oh! Great Jehovah! Guide her steps aright,
And bless her way with wisdom's truest light.

Songs of War and Peace

Songs of War and Peace

THE DOVE.

'Twas a weary day of marching in the sun,
'Neath a chafing weight of haversack and gun,
 And we heard the roar of fight,
 As we dragged into the night,
Wicked, thirsty, hungry, dusty, gray and dun.
 Words were few, and barely muttered—
 Not a kindly one was uttered,
But we halted, near the morning, in the dark,
Where torn and tumbled heapings, black and
 stark,
 The awful driftings lay,
 Swept down from yesterday.
Now, with the light, comes back the fight,
And blaze and smoke shut out that sight.
 Mad clash, and clang, and rattle,
 The hum and roar of battle,
And the swinging, and the ringing of cold steel,
Men are dying 'neath the war-god's iron heel,
The bullets whizz and spatter, whirr and whine,

And the plunge of heavy shot
Leaves its jagged, crimson blot,
In places that are shredded, 'long the line.
Now a high and swelling cheer,
Sounds above the battle, clear,
And the sweeping charge is victory's wild sign.

* * * * *

In the quiet of a woodland, far away,
I've been thinking of that dreadful battle day,
And it comes to me again,
With the oaths of fighting men,
And the double roar of double war-array.
Give me my sword! Fall in! Fall in!—
No, 'tis a dream, not battle's din—
Far comes a soft, sweet song of love,
The mate-call of the wooing dove.

THE OTHER END OF WAR.

When civil war was going on
And all the neighbor boys had gone
To fight, one side or t'other,
I had a time to get away,
For there was no one else to stay
And do for my old mother.

Besides, my sister and my wife
Were dear to me as light and life,
And cried, when I insisted
That every healthy man should go
To help his country, then, and so,
One day I went and 'listed.

For three long years, in march and fight,
I did my share, as nearly right
As God gave me to know it;
And if I hankered overmuch
For home and loved ones, peace and such,
I tried hard not to show it.

I didn't know—for I was young—
How cruelly their souls were wrung,
In all that weary waiting—
The pain of doubt, the tears and dread—
And how their hearts from anguish bled,
In prayers for war's abating.

But lately I have learned to know
The trials and the weight of woe
That come to them who love us,
When we are soldiers, gone afar,
The playthings of the fiend of war,
By all that's good above us.

* * * * *

My son's a soldier 'cross the sea;
His wife and baby, they're with me,
 And blamed if I ain't thinkin'
That wife and mother, sister too,
Are worryin' the whole day through,
 And that keeps me a-blinkin'.

They sigh and weep, and moan and pray,
And look so anxious every day,
 That in their pain and sadness
I see how women suffer most
Of all the mighty human host
 That's lashed in war's red madness.

So, in it all, I'd rather be
A soldier at the front, you see,
 Than just an old back number,
Whose heart is tender, though it's old,
And never can, 'midst grief, be cold,
 Though cased in time-cracked lumber.

And now I'd like to hear the drums
That beat when Johnnie Soldier comes
 A' marchin' back from battle.
As gray and limpy as I am,
By hokey-poke and coffer-dam!
 I'd make this old place rattle.

BATTLE.

A bugle-call—two quick, sharp notes—
Commands the column: "Halt!"
To hearts that high ambition thrills,
Leaps hope with sudden vault;
In hearts of men that duty rules,
Stern resolution reigns;
In hearts that dread of danger thralls,
The ruddy current wanes.

A crackling 'long the skirmish line,
A fringe of puffs of white,
And here and there a reeling man,
Gives earnest of the fight;
Now, loud and long, the bugles cry
The "Forward! Double quick!"
And, bending to the front, the men
Push where the bullets flick.

A flaming sheet; a flash and crash,
Along the rifle-pits
That rib the sides of yonder slope,
And now the welkin splits,
When red-breathed, roaring, brazen guns,
With hot and hurtling shot,
Spurt shredded death amidst the ranks,
That, cheering, falter not.

For answer, bellowing within
The charging column's wake,
The light artillery salutes
In thunderings that shake
The clustered hills, and one deep roar
Of battle has begun,
Where rampant wrath has seized the earth,
And blotted out the sun.

Two jagged lines, in squirming knots,
Stretched over hill and vale,
Betwixt them stake the cloud-hid space,
Where lead and iron hail
Drives criss-cross, zigzag, scurrying,
In screech, and hiss, and whine,
Across that hell, like flying snakes
Envenomed and malign.

Deep in the dreadful din and strife,
In fitful, hazy gleams,
A well-beloved hope and guide,
The battle banner streams ;
As in the sea-storm mounts and falls
The ship that rides the waves,
So lifts and dips the battle flag
Where war's red tempest raves.

Now here before a galling gust,
One brave battalion reels,

A moment stunned and staggering—
The color-sergeant kneels
With them who are his banner's guard,
But rising from the blow,
To front he speeds, and lo! the line
Bends forward like a bow.

A faint and feeble tenor shout
Becomes a deep bass roar,
And on the tumbling column sweeps
As breakers strike the shore;
It batters 'gainst the line of works,
Then dashes full amain,
High over wall and ditch, and floods
An open field again.

The pressing line, with vantage flushed,
Crowds grimly on the foe,
That, stubborn, yields no inch not fought,
But deals his blow for blow,
Till from a raking enfilade,
Of shrapnel, shell and shot,
The bleeding remnant quits the field
That pluck from valor got.

The powder-clouds and sulph'rous stench
Uplift and blow away,
And side by side, in soldier sleep—

And peace—lie Blue and Gray;
The saddened sun sinks red adown
The western sky, and, lo!
The lightnings flash, to Love that lost,
Another crash of woe.

WAR.

By blazing homes, through forests torn,
And blackened harvest-fields,
The grim and drunken god of war
In frenzied fury reels.

His breath—the sulph'rous stench of guns—
That death and famine deals,
And Pity, pleading, wounded, falls
Beneath his steel-shod heels.

THE ANGLO-SAXON WAY.

High flies the flag of freedom, by Columbia
unfurled,
And gracefully 'tis draping in the breezes of the
world;
Bright shines the gleaming galaxy of interlink-
ing stars,

While stream in undulating waves its white and
crimson bars.

The true sons of America and Britain firmly
hold

The grasp of hearty friendliness, stronger far
than bands of gold ;

No more they meet as enemies, in grim and
hostile ranks,

But now as brethren of one blood, enlighten-
ment's phalanx,

They meet as freemen everywhere, and closer
weave the bands

That bind the kindred people of these our kin-
dred lands ;

And they sing the same rich music, that, swell-
ing as the sea,

Doth blend with grand "God Save the Queen,"
"My Country, 'Tis of Thee."

All proudly praise the heroes that freedom's
battle won,

As British men of letters and statesmanship
have done.

In days of war and days of peace, in forum, field
and home,

Where'er the British drumbeat's heard, beneath
the ether dome ;

From eloquence of mighty Pitt, who gave fair
Justice tongue,
To praises of George Washington, that gifted
Byron sung ;
From Green, the great historian of Britain's rule
and sway,
To Cobden, Bright and Gladstone of her brilliant
latter day ;

With Macaulay and with Thackeray, and other
mighty men,
Who Albion's glory have enriched with miter,
sword and pen ;
Whose breadth and wealth of candor magnani-
mously gave
The meed of praise and honor to Columbia's
true and brave.

So let the nation's bells ring out, and all her
banners wave,
While freedom's light from freedom's sun the
blessed land shall lave,
And while the blended songs we sing shall
drown the marplot's yells,
Sound loud the cornets, roll the drums and ring
the nation's bells.

Fling out the flag that patriots have trusting
followed when

Dread battle's blight has tried the souls of truest,
bravest men,
And when, betimes, 'twas only seen within the
rifting cloud
Before whose storm of leaden hail War's sable
plume has bowed.

And while the bells are ringing, and joy is every-
where ;
While Harmony is singing two songs of single
air,
We'll praise the God of nations, and one undy-
ing love,
And bow in grateful thankfulness for blessings
from above.

And let us hope the pattern set by Anglo-Saxon
sires,
Who lit for all humanity sweet freedom's altar
fires,
May serve till all the nations shall stand beside
us here,
Unawed by any despot's rule, or aught to make
them fear.

Then higher yet the banner of Columbia shall
fly,
And brighter shine the gleaming stars, against
its azure sky ;

And yet more gracefully shall wave, its bars of
red and white,
An emblem and a talisman of perfect human
right.

BLUE AND GRAY ARE ONE.

Hurrah for the north! Hurrah for the south!
Hurrah for the east and the west!
The nation is one, undivided and free,
And all of its sons are the best.
Together the men of the whole blessed land
Are firmly united in one mighty band,
And they that were once the Blue and the Gray
Are gathered beneath dear Old Glory today,
With men of both sides in command.

Then march, boys, march; we'll set fair Cuba
free!
March, boys, march; with Miles and Fitzhugh
Lee.
Forward, all the line! and be your song's re-
frain:
"America for freemen," and, "The flag with-
out a stain!"

Hurrah for the blue! Hurrah for the gray!
Hurrah for the sons of them all!

Together we come, and united we stand,
To answer humanity's call;
Freemen arising, to dash down the foe;
Blue and gray dealing him death at each blow;
Mingling a host from the north and the south,
'Neath the same banner, and from every mouth
One battle cry, "Freedom!" shall go.

Hurrah for the guns! Hurrah for the ships!
Hurrah for the flag of the stars!
Hurrah for the men who fought under that!
Or under the stars and the bars!
They're rallying now, brave, ardent and strong,
To punish injustice and overthrow wrong;
Columbia rises and leads in the fight,
Her sons to do battle for honor and right,
And they're singing America's song.

ALL IN GRAY.

'Twas nearly forty years ago—
A long, long time away—
That some of us were boys in blue
And some were boys in gray.
But at the end of many years,
Along life's rugged way,

One that's worn,
 and torn,
 and ribboned,
We have followed, marching, singing,
In the days of strong young manhood,
And still those songs are ringing
 In the gray and grand old souls,
Who, in life's
 hard strife,
 still trudging,
Hold it dearest of all banners,
For it led them, marching, fighting,
Through sorrows and hosannahs,
By the glory of its folds.

So, with tears,
 and cheers,
 we greet it,
And with songs of love and gladness,
For the mem'ries clustered 'round it teem,
With fondness and with sadness,
 And the lights and shades of days,
That in youth,
 and truth,
 and trial,
Made the tinting of life's manner,
For we laughed and sang, and comrades died
Around that brave old banner,
 In battle's blare and blaze.

An' when I ast her for her name,
She laughed and then she said,
“ My name is Rhoda Raglan’,
An’ I’m waitin’, don’t you see,
For pappy dear to come back here,
Wif ’ sompen good for me.

“ We was livin’ in the cabin,
In the clarin’ over thar,
Where the little crick went rattlin’ by
So sparklin’ an’ so clar,
But now the water’s muddy,
An’ it’s bloody, an’ the banks
Is trompled, an’ my posies
Is jest ruined by them Yanks.

“ Our cabin’s full of hurted men,
They groaned the worstest way—
They was hurted in the battle
With we’uns yesterday,
An’ ther arms an’ legs a’bleedin’,
It was sich er awful sight,
I didn’t sleep a little wink
The livelong night,

“ So I’ve come, good Mr. Man,
To wait for pappy here,
My mother went away to God,

Last winter was a year,
An' we was livin' all alone
In the cabin over thar,
An' why he don't come back to me
I think it's monst'ous quar."

She was a pooty five-year-old,
With eyes of deepest blue,
An' flossy curls an' dimpled cheeks,
With roses in 'em too.
I had some little kids at home,
Just like this battle waif,
And now I thanked the Lord above
That they were well and safe.

A minie ball had pierced my arm,
That lay now in a sling ;
The hurt was just a flesh-cut,
An' the pain a smartish sting,
But I had got it fairly,
An' well enough I knew,
The helpless arm would take me home
Within a day or two.

So I plead with Rhoda Raglan'
To go along with me,
An' maybe we would find her pap
Somewhar in Tennessee.

An' yit I know'd her father
Was away beyond life's ills,
So I tuck her to Kentucky
To my home among the hills.

We raised her jest as good an' true,
As ef she'd been our own,
Blood of mine and mother's,
And bone of our bone,
An' she's been as good a daughter
As any of the three,
An' a blessing to my homestead,
An' to mother an' to me.

She's thirty-six, or thereabouts,
I can't exactly tell—
But she married in the neighborhood,
And married monstrous well;
An' she's got a little daughter,
That prattles at my knee,
An' 'minds me heaps of Rhoda,
Down at Shiloh—don't you see?

"LE REVE."

Sleep, ah sleep, ye brave, and listen,
In your dreams to battle's hum ;
See the foeman's armor glisten ;
Hear the bugle-note and drum.
Heads that rest on unslung knapsacks,
'Neath your blankets and the night,
Close beside the bristling gunstacks,
Dream of morrow and the fight.

From the cottage homes or manors,
Whence ye came, a nation's pride,
Prayers are rising for your banners,
And that weal may them betide.
'Twixt the hearthstone and the bivouac,
Love is whisp'ring words of cheer ;
'Twixt the pillow and the knapsack,
Love, in dreams, brings lovers near.

When those heads are white with glory,
When the shadows from the west
Lengthen as ye tell your story,
In the vet'ran's ward of rest,
May no ingrate's word of sneering
Reach one heart of all the brave,
But may honor, praise and cheering
Guard old valor to the grave.

DAUGHTERS OF AMERICA.

Ring out, ye bells, your sweetest chimes ;
Sing, all ye poets, dulcet rhymes ;
Shout loud, ye crowds, in strongest praise ;
Shine out, fair sun, in softest rays,
 And dance, ye rippling waters.
For Freedom's sons will sing a song,
That in a chorus, high and strong,
Shall sounding ring, from sea to sea,
Whose grandest harmony shall be,
 America's true daughters.

Oh, they are loyal, brave and true,
And fair the red, and white and blue,
That in the nation's colors rise,
Shine in their cheeks and brows and eyes
 And glow upon their banners.
From ocean shore to mountain crest ;
From north and south and east and west ;
From all the bright and beauteous land,
They come, a blessing-laden band,
 And singing sweet hosannahs.

With cheering words from such a mouth
As thine, oh daughter of the south !
And love from such a loyal breast
As thine, oh daughter of the west !

The sons can never falter.
And while in north and east shall stand
The loyal, helping, sister band,
Sweet Freedom's day shall know no night,
But ever shall the flame glow bright
Upon the country's altar.

A SONG OF PEACE.

Silver white, a cloud is drifting,
In the nation's radiant sky;
Through it lucent beams are rifling,
Where "Old Glory's" colors fly.
From that throne of blessed Freedom,
Comes a song should never cease;
Rolling on, a great Te Deum;
'Tis the mighty song of Peace;
'Tis the dulcet song of Peace.

Kneels the war-god, calm and humble,
'Fore the dazzling hosts that sing
Anthems hushing battle's rumble;
Songs that down from heaven ring;
Waving there the snow-white banner,
Robed in Honor's spotless fleece;
Seraphs chant the sweet hosannah;

Sing the antiphon of Peace;
Chant the psalmody of Peace.

Oh, the sorrow and the glory,
That the swelling anthem tells!
Battles won and war's red story,
Roaring guns and ringing bells;
Tears that flow for heroes martyred,
Winning Fame's unending lease;
Lives for country's honor bartered,
And the blessed song of Peace
And the joyous song of Peace.

A SONG OF THANKSGIVING.

God of the nations; Lord of all;
Father of Love and Peace;
With swelling hearts and singing souls,
And gratitude's increase,
We, lovers of this blessed land,
Thank Thee, the only King
To whom a freeman bends the knee,
And joyously we sing
Thy praises, till Columbia's skies
With high hosannahs ring:
The King! The King!
Blest be the freeman's King!

From peace, through battle Thou hast led,
And with "Good-will to men,"
The snow-white banner drapes beside
"Old Glory's" folds again.
Now North and South, of this fair land,
Are welded in the blaze
Of war's red furnace, closer yet,
And, as in olden days,
The music of the Union rings
To Freedom's God, in praise :
The King! The King!
Blest be the freeman's King!

"OLD GLORY."

See in the banner's splendor, bright
The crimson, white and blue unite,
And 'mong the undulating bars
Gleam, honor's light, the twinkling stars,
Till blest to sight and pure as gold,
The flag, "Old Glory," is unrolled.

O'er all the land, on every sea,
Floats high this ensign of the free,
And guided by its lambent light,
Our young republic, in the right,
Leads ever onward, stern arrayed,
And wielding Freedom's battle-blade.

Negro Dialect Verses

Negro Dialect Verses

IN THE FALL OF THE YEAR.

De leaves is sorter turnin'
On de sycamo' trees ;
Dar's a quar kind er feelin'
In de cool mawnin' breeze ;
De worl' is lookin' dreamy,
An' somehow it 'pear
Dat de sunbeams is sifted,
In de fall of de year.

Hit seem as ef dey's shinin'
In a shimmer sort er way,
Dat could sing er song er sorrow,
To'des de eendin' o' de day,
Wid music lak de dove make,
When settin' dar in fear
She gwine to lose her true-love,
In de fall of de year.

You mighty glad you livin',
An' you takes er heap er res' ;
De worl' is kind an' gentle,
An' you looks to'des de wes',

Whar de golden sun's er sinkin',
An' you doan sorter keer ;
You waits for whut is comin',
In de fall of de year.

You knows, a little later,
Mistuh Fros' he gwine to come
An' candy dem persimmons,
Whut you gwine to gather some,
While de possum is er fat'nin',
An' you meks dat 'simmon beer,
For to drink wid dat ole possum,
In de fall of de year.

When de woods is look de fines'
In gold, an' green, an red,
An' de apples is er tumblin'
F'um de limbs overhead,
Dey's a tender sort er feelin',
Lak er crowdin' back a tear,
An' dar's somebody missin'
In de fall of de year.

You does a heap er thinkin',
Of de times dat done is pas',
De spring an' de summer-time,
Dat went so mighty fas' ;

De mawnin' of yo' chilehood,
 When happiness was here,
 An' you never thought to bother
 'Bout de fall of de year.

Hit's gittin' to'des de evenin',
 When you teks to lookin' back,
 An' de load is gittin' heavy
 Whut you useter love to pack;
 When de sun is shinin' slantin',
 An' sorrow seem a'near,
 Lak de song of dove a'mournin',
 In de fall of de year.

ROSIE'S SUNDAY CLOTHES.

Um er talkin' mighty proper,
 Whut um talkin' to you now;
 You gwine to 'gree wid all I say,
 Er win' up in a row,
 Kase um tellin' to you, sassy,
 Dat dey ain' no gal lak Rose,
 When she blossom Sunday mawnin'
 In her go-to-meetin' clo'se.

Rose, Rose, my sweet Rose!
 Ain' she a stunner

In her go-to-meetin' clo'se
 'Deed she is a posie,
As evah niggah knows,
 My pansie, posie, Rosie,
In her go-to-meetin' clo'se.

I goes wid her to meetin'
 Evah Sunday mawnin', sho',
Fur dey ain' no other niggah
 Nomernated fur her beau ;
Dey knows of my dejections,
 An' dey stan's erlong in rows,
Mighty 'spectful to dat lady,
 In her go-to-meetin' clo'se.

I would kyarve a coon in slices,
 An' jes' feed him to de crows,
Ef I evah cotch him winkin'
 At mer brown manila Rose,
An' dey ain' no niggah livin',
 In de house, er ouden do's,
'Ceptin' dis, dat's gwine to swing her,
 In her go-to-meetin' clo'se.

IF I COULD LIVE AS LONG AS
METHUSALUM.

If I could live just as long as old Methusalum,
Him dat used to live out towards old Jerusalum,
Mebbe I wouldn' sorter wheedle an' bamboozlum,
Oh, no, sinner man.

I wouldn' be bothered 'bout when will de king-
dom come ;
Dey couldn' skeer me wid de roll of de battle
drum ;
'Deed I wouldn' keer a cent for de whole blame
capoodlelum,
Oh, no, sinner man.

If I could live just as long as old Methusalam,
I'd sing you a song about old Mister Abraham,
An' I wouldn' be a day widout de possum an' de
yaller yam,
Oh, no, sinner man.

I'd take a little journey away out to Amsterdam,
Roll aroun' de worl', an' live on de berry jam ;
An' I wouldn' do a thing but mash ev'ry cullud
lam',
Oh, no, sinner man.

If I could live just as long as old Methusaloo,
What do you think that I would sorter try to do?
Do everybody, an' hoodoo de Spanish, too,
Oh, no, sinner man.

I wouldn' go a'soldierin' an' fightin' like a zoo-
zoo;
An' I wouldn' be a black cat, an' lookin' like a
hoo-hoo,
But I'd be so mighty good an' old, dey couldn'
call me too new,
Oh, no, sinner man.

THERE'S NO LITTLE COON LIKE MINE.

Run here, mer pickaninny,
Doan yo' heah yo' mammy callin'?
De sun am er sinkin'
An' de shadders is er crawlin'
Way f'um de thicket, an' old man B'ar
Is er hidin' an' er waitin'
Fur to cotch yo' dar.
Yo' daddy's gone er huntin',
En he tuck dat sack,
So I speck he bring some chicken'
When he come er trottin' back.

There's no little coon like mine ;
Jes' see how he face do shine ;
Come rockaby, mer tiny,
Yo' mammy's pickaninny ;
There's no little coon like mine.

Rockaby, mer baby,
Ain' yo' nevah gwine a'sleepin' ?
De win' am er howlin',
An' de ghos'es is er creepin'
Down th'oo de flue, an' de blue-gum man
Is er waitin' fur to bite um,
Ez sho ez he can.
Yo' daddy is a'comin',
An' de way he walk
He's er totin' watah-millions
An' de shugar-caney stalk.

Mammy is er rockin'
Of her baby, an' er singin',
De ole owl's er hootin',
An' de yuther birds is wingin'
'Way to dar nestes, up de high tree,
An' de cawn-pone's in de oven
Fur daddy an' me.
Yo' daddy's mighty handy
'Roun' er chicken roos',
An' he got a tas'e fur pullet,
An' he doan despise a goose.

CAWN-PONE AN' GREENS.

Dey talks about dar eatin',
Dar salids, j'int's, an' sich,
An' all de fixin's dat becomes
De tables of de rich ;
I 'low de high-tone doin's,
Dat comes widin dar means,
Is monst'ous good, but gimme, please
Some hot cawn-pone an' greens.

Cawn-pone an' turnup greens !
Hear me, whut I say ?
Bile de greens wid hawg-jole,
An' dar I wanter stay,
Jis' wid my Lawd an' Marster,
Contented an' alone,
'Longside dat meat an' turnup-greens,
An' shortened hot cawn-pone.

Mos' coons is gone on possum ;
I likes him mighty well,
An' I likes a watah-million,
Heap mo' dan I kin tell ;
But I 'clar to Gracious Goodness,
Mer feelin's mostly leans
To'des whut yo' hear me hollerin',
Dat's hot cawn-pone an' greens.

YOU KIN NEVAH MAKE A WHITE
MAN FROM A COON.

I've seed 'em try to do it, sence the day dat I
was born,
An' ef dey keeps er tryin' tell Ole Gabr'el blow
his horn,
Dey's nevah gwine to reach it, tell a cannon hits
de moon,
An' dat is tryin' fur to make a white man from
a coon.

You kin nevah make a white man from a coon,
No mo' dan go to heaven in a b'loon.
You hear me what I say,
En I'll prove it any day,
You kin nevah make a white man from a coon.

De coon he love spring chicken, an' he'll get de
fus' one, sho ;
De early watah-million gwine to reach him long
befo'
De white folks know hit's comin', and he nevah
minds de price,
He gwine to git dat eatin' sho' as seven's in de
dice.

De white man he's contented for to w'ar some
quiet clothes ;

De coon he wants his garments, from his head
 clean to his toes,
To talk out loud in meetin', and jis' holler when
 he come
To beat de ban' er music, wid de bugles and de
 drum.

De white man hunt de shadow when de sun is
 brilein' hot,
De coon he love de sunshine, and he'd ruther
 sleep dan not
Wid his darkey face er shinin' fum de glory of
 de sky,
Whilse de skeeters sings eroun' him, hush-a-by,
 mer baby, bye.

HIS BRACER IN THE MORNING.

Dey's a monst'ous sight er trouble
 On de ole man's mine',
Wid 'leben colts to curry,
 An' work of ev'ry kine',
En I has to whoop an' hustle,
 Long fo' de light er day,
Kase it make de ole man bustle—
 You hear me whut I say—
Fur to worry th'oo de bizniss,

Afo' de day is dawnin'
An' mix an' fix de cocktail
Fo' marster in de mawnin'.

Dar's nuffin' gwine to budge him
F'um de ole arm char,
Tell de cocktail am er comin',
Kase he jis' dat mighty quar
Dat he sho'ly ain' er fittin'
Fur nuffin' all de day,
Tell de cocktail I is gittin'
Is gone de proper way.
Den he laugh away all trouble,
De bother he is scawnin',
When he lay dat big foundation
Wid his cocktail in de mawnin'.

You kin talk about de julips,
An' de whisky toddy, too,
An' de apple-jack an' honey,
An' de good ole mountin' dew,
But dar's nuffin' gwine ter fix him
For de juties of de day,
An' nuffin' gwine to comfort him,
An' drive de blues away,
Lak dat whut I is talk erbout—
You hear my gentle warnin',
Dey's nuffin' dat so lif' him up
As a cocktail in de mawnin'.

He jes as good an' kine' er man
As any evah seed,
En he gwineter holp de neighbor po'
Whenevah dey's in need,
But here's a niggah talkin' straight :
I wouldn' stay erbout
Ef de 'gredients of dem cocktails
At marster's should give out ;
I'd ring er bell, er blow er hawn,
To give de people warnin'
Ef marster evah miss one time,
Dat cocktail in de mawnin'.

I'M A KING AN' I W'ARS DE CROWN.

I'm a high-tone coon an' a king,
Jis de warmest kind of a thing.
I'm a velvet man, an' de black-an'-tan
Dey prances along when I sing.
Yes, I'm known as de cullud boss,
Mighty dangerous when I'm cross ;
I leads de style for mo' dan a mile ;
I'm killin' as a late June fros'.

CHORUS :

Evah yaller gal in town,
Dat sees me coming down,
She say: "Dat's him. Don't he look trim?"
I'm a king an' I w'ars de crown.

I'm de swiftest thing on de pike,
Kase I rides de swellest bike,
De tandem kind, wid a gal^o on behind,
An' we leads evah thing we strike.
I'm de sassiest sort of a coon—
De worst dis side of de moon.
I shimmers along, a'singin' a song,
To de music of dis here tune.

I'm de only one of de kind
Dat de black folks evah could find;
I'm red-hot game, an' I'm known to fame,
Kase I nevah was left behind.
Dey wants me on de gin'ral's staff,
An' dey howls for my photograph;
When I blows in view, on de avenue,
I'm ahead three mile and a half.

I'm de dudest coon of 'em all,
An' de beau-i-deal of de ball;
I'm de ladies' pet, of de cullud set,
An' de model for spring and fall.
I'm de head of de high degree,
An' de fruit on de 'simmon tree;
I goes wid a vim, kase I'm in de swim,
An' about de whole thing is me.

ALL DAY ON LAWD'S DAY.

Oh dey do tell me dat away ovah dar,
All day on de Lawd's day,
De gates of Heaven is wide ajar
All day on de Lawd's day.
An' when de sinnah leave dis place,
All day on de Lawd's day,
His soul goes up to de throne of grace
Dat day on de Lawd's day.

CHORUS:

Den I want to die on de Lawd's day,
Don't you hear me 'clar?
I want to die on de Lawd's day
When de gates of Heaven is ajar.

Ole miss she rid de Jordan wave,
All day on de Lawd's day,
De doctors tried her life to save,
All day on de Lawd's day.
She rid ontill de sun went down,
All day on de Lawd's day,
Den her soul broke loost and won de crown,
Dat day on de Lawd's day,

Ole marster 'rastled too, one day,
All day on de Lawd's day,

Trying on dis earth to stay,
All day on de Lawd's day.
He 'rastled till dem stars arose,
All day on de Lawd's day.
An' when he got dar dem gates was close',
Dat day on de Lawd's day.

HOW EPHUM WON A GUN.

Dat muskit kicked me th'oo de fence,
En' I ain' got my bref good sense.
Say, daddy, woan' you tell yo' son
Whar in de worl' you got dat gun?

I got it in de waugh, you dunce,
Ez Ise tole you mo' dan once.
How many times mus' dat be said
To git hit th'oo yo' kinky head?

Laws, daddy! 'clar I didn' know
Dat you wuz in de waugh befo',
I wisht you'd tell me all about
How you got in an' den got out.

I wuzn't in de waugh befo';
I went wid my young marster, Joe.
En when Marse Joe wuz in de line
In co'se I allers rid behin'.

But when de battle it begun,
I stayed dar wid him—hear me, mun?
I stayed dar totein' all de truck,
An' Marster say I bring him luck.

Den one day, when de line wuz pressed,
I hid er skillit on my breast,
En run some stovepipe up my legs
To keep de bullets from dem pegs.

Den me an' young Marse Joe, we fit,
En we would ben'er fightin' yit,
But jis' ez we had tuck er gun
Marse Lee, he say, de waugh wuz done.

So Gin'l Grant he tuck us all,
En pooty soon I heerd him call:
“ You, Ephum Jones, come heah to me!
I sees you hidin' hin' dat tree.”

So I goes up, a'trimlin' so,
Dat skillit fall an' mash my toe;
An' Gin'l Grant he say to me,
“ You's fight'nis coon I evah did see.”

En den he say—right fo' Marse Joe—
“ You'll git a penshin for dat toe.”
Still I ain' nevah seed it yit,
But dat's kase of de side I fit.

But Marse Grant gimme dis yer gun,
En say dat it I'd fa'rly won;
"You keep it, Ephum, fo' yo'se'f."
I thanked him, en he bowed an lef'.

Dat's how I got dat good ole gun,
En lemme tell you whut, mer son,
Ef you'd jis load her wid mo' sense
She wouldn' kick you thoo de fence.

SANDY'S SUNDAY SHIRT.

I'se got a Sunday shirt,
An' it look so mighty peart,
My Julie gal she hang it on de do'
All thoo de week-a-days,
An' she do dat, so she says,
For to 'form de folks as how we isn' po'.

Oh! de Sunday shirt is hanging on de do';
For to let de passin' people fully know,
Dat de pussons livin' dar
Is er doin' pooty fa'r,
An' dey lacks a mighty heap of bein' po'.

De place whar I hol's out—
You heah dis niggah shout—

You kin always tell, for sartin an' for sho',
Ef Julie gal's in town,
Or anywhar aroun'
By dat Sunday shirt a'hangin' on de do'.

JAW-BONE TALK.

Hen, she fit de chicken hawk ;
Jaw-bone eat wid knife and fawk,
So dem jaw-bone talkers talk,
Whilse dem walkers walk de chalk.

Talk jaw-bone, do go home,
In come Jin wid 'er jousey on.

Alligator on a log
Holdin' talk wid er high-back hog ;
'Gator lip dat rivah fence,
En I ain' seed dat ole hog sence.

Cawn-pone in de fryin' pan,
Look so good to er hawngry man,
In dar wid de possum fat,
I ca' stop en stan' all dat.

Ole Jack Fros' er sassy man,
Foolin' roun' in Dixie lan' ;

Tek de white folks by de nose,
Grab de niggah by de toes.

Cotton seed an' cotton sowed,
Rainy day an' cawn done hoed,
Pusley growin' mighty fas',
Down dar in de gyarden sass.

“DEM SKEETERS.”

See dat ole skeeter buzzin' 'roun'?

He co'tein' sartin death.

I'm layin' fur him, mighty low,

An' soon I'll stop his breath.

He dunno who he foolin' wid,

But when I smash 'im down,

Dat skeeter gwine to quit his trick

Er buzzin', buzzin' 'roun'.

Ker-bip! He dodged me dat ar time,

But he doan know no mo'

Dan jis' to come er trapesin' back,

An' den I'll git him sho'.

“Sizz-izz”—you hear his sassy song?

He done lit on my face;

Ker-bip! He'll nevah sing no mo';

He done is run he race.

Dem skeeters 'minds me, mighty heap,
Er dese yar mortal fools
Dat thinks dey's gwine to do erway
Wid all de laws en rules,
An' run things jis' to suit deyselves,
En live high, every day;
Git all dey wants, an' do no work,
An' hoot at givin' pay.

Dey gwine to keep a pestrin' 'roun'
Tell ev'ry chance has flew,
An' Ole Starvation done is come
An' smashed de hawngry crew.
De man what works whar he belong,
An' win his 'onis' way,
Will l'arn how dat beats sizzin' 'roun'—
You hear me say my say.

TELL ME, HONEY.

W'en ole Unc' Gabel done blow his bugle hawn,
Tell me, tell me, honey,
Will you meet me by de ribber, jes sho' as you
is bawn?
Tell me, tell me, honey
Kase I won't cyar, ef you ain' dar,

Fur de blas' on de bugle er de buzzin' in de air,
No, mer honey true ; no, mer honey.
Dat mek me say whut I do.

Dat mek me say whut I do,
An' whut I say is true,
I ain' love nobody 'tall but you
So dat mek me say whut I do.

Dar ain' nobody I'se er lovin' but you,
Dat's true, dat's true, honey.
Fur you is sweeter dan de honey in de dew,
Dat's true, dat's true, honey.
You is mer life—a'mos' mer wife,
Er I couldn' stan' de trouble, de worry an' de
strife—
No, mer honey true ; no, mer honey.
Dat mek me say whut I do.

Won't you come erlong wid me, bright shinin'
eyes?
Tell me, tell me, honey.
Dem eyes dat shines lak di'monds in de skies,
Tell me, tell me, honey.
Down at yo' feet I begs, mer sweet,
Take away de trouble an' mek life complete ;
Do, mer honey true ; do, mer honey.
Dat mek me say whut I do.

FO' DEY SET DE DARKIES FREE.

Dar's er monst'ous sight er difference,
Jes' as sho' as you is bawn,
On de ole plantation farmin'
'Mong de 'backer and de cawn.
De days ain't lak dey useter wuz,
Hit's plain ernuff to see,
An' de change is mighty bindin'
Sence dey set de darkies free.

Dar's er fiel' dat's growed in saplin's,
Whar jis' many of a day
We'se hilt de plow and worked de hoe,
Lak hit wuz fines' play.
De sassafrac has tuck it, en
Dar's on'y you an' me
To fight dem briar bushes,
Sence dey set de darkies free.

We has got er heap er freedom,
But de shugar's mighty skase,
An' de birds doan seem er singin',
'Roun' de blessed ole home place
As sweet as in de days back dar,
Of plenty, work an' glee,
Dat we kin re-commember
Fo' dey set de darkies free.

HARD TIMES GWINE AWAY.

I gwine to wrop dese fish lines up

An' leave dis fishin' hole.

I gwine to throw dis bait-hawn 'way

An' hide dis fishin' pole.

Dar ain' no time fur fishin' now,

Dat whistle done is blow,

An' I gwine down to dat ole mill

Ez fas' ez I kin go.

"What fur?" you axes, jes' ez if

You doan' know nuffin' 't all

'Bout how ole Hard Times gwine erway

Whar he can't hurt we-all;

An' how de mill is start ergin,

An Good Times he am come,

To give us people lots er work

An' make dem mill wheels hum.

"How come?" Well, you is monst'ous slow,

Whar is you ben erway

Dat you ain' hear de joyful news

Dat come out here today?

De white folks, dey done fix things up

An' all de signs is right,

So bizness gwine to start ergin

An' whoop up, out er sight.

Dem 'lection times is ovah now,
An' all de fuss is done ;
Dey's done quit talkin' pol-er-tics
An' gwine ter work, mer son.
Dey tell me dat, t'roo-out der lan'
De mills is start once mo',
An' dat ole wolf is druv erway
From sniffin' 'roun' de do'.

You'll heah de 'scape pipe puffin' now,
An' heah de stiddy noise
Dat soun's when dat ole mill's at work,
An' heah de singin' boys,
All happy kase dey's got er chance
To arn de things dey need
To keep deir wives an' chillun warm
An' give 'em fittin' feed.

Dat's why I gwine to wrop dis line,
An' leave dis fishin' hole,
An' throw erway dis ole bait-hawn
An' hide de fishin' pole.
De whole worl' is lookin' brighter now,
An' you is gwine ter see
Some prosp'rous times, if you come on
An' go ter work wid me.

ZOE'S PLEA.

'Deed Zo' was black, en me in love
Wid dat dark, woolly lamb;
En now we's married good en strong
En happy ez er clam.
But bress yo' life, we had to go
Clean outen owah station,
All kase dat Zo', she up en say,
Widout no hezmitation:
"Ise live' ermung dese pasturs, mun,
Sence I had re-collection,
But I mus' move—dis blue grass doan'
Match up wid my complexion."

THE DINNER HORN.

I 'members, honey, mighty well,
De good ole times dat's gone,
When us darkeys useter stop de hoe
To hear de dinnah hawn.
Oh dat was sweetes' music
'Bout de middle of de day—
Dat soundin' of de ole cow hawn
To call us all away,
To call us all away
To hot pone en hock-bone,
Dat mek de darkey gay.

I'd lak to see dem times ergin,
 En hear de darkeys sing
Whilse dey spun along de cotton row
 En make de hillsides ring.
Down dar in good ole Dixie,
 Whar de dinnah hawn did blow,
Down in de lan' er cotton bolls
 To call us f'um de hoe,
 To call us f'um de hoe,
 To hot pone en hock-bone,
 Dar's whar I wanten go.

De drivah, he was sassy sho',
 But dat was jes' his way,
We was clothed an' fed an' sheltered,
 An' no cold an' hawngry day
Could ketch' us, in de sunny Souf,
 An' sho' as you is bawn
Dar was plenty waitin' fur us when
 Ole Dinah blowed de hawn,
 Ole Dinah blowed de hawn,
 Fur hot pone, en hock-bone,
 En mustard, greens, en cawn.

Dem lan's is monst'ous idle, now,
 We'se tickled wid de hoe,
'Twell laughin' things was comin' so
 Dat you could see um grow.

Aun' Dinah's up in Heben's res'
An' all de darkeys gone
To whar dey'll nevah hear no mo'
Dat good ole dinnah hawn,
Dat good ole dinnah hawn,
Fur hot pone, an' hock-bone,
Dem times is come en gone.

MY ALABAMA ROSE.

My honey love she's lovely,
Lak roses on de vine ;
Lawd love dat lovely lady
What's a' dwellin' in my min'.
Some roses dey is sweetes'
When wet wid mawnin' dew,
My yaller rose is sweetes'
De livelong day all thoo.

Den laugh an' shout an' sing, you niggahs, sing,
An' dance an' prance an' mek de banjo ring ;
Chune up dat fiddle mighty fine,
Den walk de chalk an' toe de line.

I gwine to sail an' sail away
Thoo all de rollin' worl',
Jes' seekin' out fur diemonts

To deck my yaller pearl.
When I come back, my honey,
In dat sweet bye an' bye,
Lak bees into de country,
We'll tek up wings an' fly.

We'll git er cabin, Rosy,
Down by de rivah's side,
An' you will be my honey
An' my Alabama bride;
An' dar we'll live as happy
As 'gators in de sloo,
An' lovin' one ernother's jes'
'Bout all we'll hatter do.

RAMBO'S SERENADE.

Mighty pooty gal down dar at owah house,
En she ain't er gwine to stay ve'y long;
I'll steal to her do', jes' still ez er mouse,
En sing her a mighty pooty song.
I'll tell her in de song how I love her,
En chune up de banjo sof' en low,
'Twell she think all de twinklin' stars above her
Is jine in de chorus wid her beau.

Oh, my honey love!
Oh, my turtle dove!
Doan you hear me plead?
Come, my lady love;
Come, my yaller dove;
You is what I need.

De whippoorwill flutes down dar by de crick.
De mock-bird's singin' his mate to sleep,
En dar whar de woods is so black en thick
De sof' win' blows wid er sigh en er weep.
Hit's a weepin' fur me, my honey so true,
Kase I'se so sorry, en sick, en sad;
Yes, I is a'longin', mer lady, for you;
'Deed I is a' wantin' you so mighty bad.

Ole day'll come er creepin' in now pooty soon—
Come er creepin' f'um de hills over yan—
He gwine drive away dat bright, shiny moon
En spread out his glory in de lan'.
Den I goes back to work, en I toils all de day,
Jes' er sighin' en er longin' fur you,
So come out, mer lady, en min' what I say,
Please er come out, mer lady, oh, do!

Dat pooty yaller gal gwine to come outen dar,
En go 'long wid me to de ball
Whar she gwine to be de belle an' de star,
An' de swelles' thing of 'em all;

Den we gwine to dance 'twell de comin' of de day
An' shy 'twell de shadder of de night,
Den me an' de gal, we'se er gwine to scoot erway,
By de light of de moonshine bright.

Dat pooty yaller gal kin cut de pigeon-wing,
En beat sich er chune on de flo',
Dat de alligator pat, an' try fur to sing,
'Twell he face open wide, lak er do'.
En de ole gray mule, standin' down at de gate,
He lif' up his ears mighty high,
En he lissen, en he 'low he mighty glad to wait,
'Twell de music is done roll by.

LOO, JOHN.

I looked acrost de ocean,
An' I seed de waters flashin';
Oh Loo, John, oh Loo.
Ole mist' and marst' er comin',
Jis' er tarin' an' er slashin';
Oh Loo, John, oh Loo.
Ole miss rid de black hoss,
En master rid de pony;
Oh Loo, John, oh Loo.
Dat little bit er pony
Whut dey call de Macaroni;
Oh Loo, John, oh Loo.

REFRAIN :

Oh Loo, John, oh Loo ;
Whar is dat hole dat de hog got thoo?

I rid him 'roun' de mountin',
 Whilse de people wuz a'countin';
 Oh Loo, John, oh Loo.
His foot struck a rock, an'
 Hit jarred a loose a fountin';
 Oh Loo, John, oh Loo.
Den he flew to de eas', an'
 He flew acrost de mountin';
 Oh Loo, John, oh Loo.
Den he flew outen sight
 En we drunk f'um de fountin';
 Oh Loo, John, oh Loo.

A 'POSSUM SONG.

Jis' lissen, niggahs, lissen ;
 I'se gwine to sing er song ;
Hit's gwine to be mos' monst'ous sweet,
 An' yit not monst'ous long.
- I'se gwine to sing er 'possum,
 An' some er Yaller Loo,
An' mention dem big Georgy yams,
 Fur dey is yaller, too.

Den hear me ; oh hear me,
Chune de banjo high ;
Fur me an' Loo is livin'
Away up in de sky.

W'en I comes in f'um huntin',
'An' brings dat file-tail beas',
Dat Loo's de happyis' niggah gal,
Sence Knee-bud-neezer's feas'.
She tek ole Mistoo 'Possum,
En git down awn her knees,
An' fix him clean en wholesome,
Den hang him up to freeze.

Way 'long too-wads nex' evenin',
'Bout early cannell light,
You niggahs all come snoopin' roun'
A'smellin' fur a bite,
Kase Yaller Loo's done roas' im,
Wid dem sweet, yaller yams,
An' basted him, mer honeys,
Wid de essence er de hams.

You's monst'ous frien'ly wid me,
Kase he's persuadin', sho';
But you has to smell him thoo de chinks,
Fur I is shet de do'.
When Loo and me's done wid 'im,
An' cyarved him to de heart,
Den tek he bones, en 'rastle
Fur de lazy niggah's part.

HEAR DEM NIGGAHS SINGIN'.

I hear dem niggahs singin'
De songs of long ago,
An thoo my mem'ry's ringin'
De tales I useter know—
Ringin', ringin',
Like de songs de birds is singin'
Whilse aroun' dar nestes wingin',
Dey is singin' sof' an' low.

Mah soul is weepin', sighin',
Fur de times dat's come an' gone,
When de niggahs wuz a viein'
Wid one 'nuther 'mong de cawn,
Pullin', haulin',
Jes' er singin' an' er bawlin',
Er 'raslin' an' er fallin'
An' er wishin' fur de hawn.

I'm monst'ous ole an' needy,
An' trim'lin' on mah pins,
An' I am prayin', yes, indeedy,
Fur forgiveness fur mah sins.
Prayin', prayin',
Whilse de youngsters is er playin',
An' axin' whilse I'm stayin'
Fur de Lawd to let me in.

Do hear dat banjo th'ummin'—
Ef I wuz young ergin
I lay I'd be ermong um
En furgittin' 'bout all sin.
Th'ummin', th'ummin',
Jis' hear dat banjo hummin'—
Say, niggahs, I'se a' comin';
Ole age ca' keep me in.

SORRY FOR THE LORD.

I'm gittin' sorry fur you, Lawd,
Indeed an' trufe, I am;
De niggah wants so monst'ous much,
Cep' Gilead an' de ba'm.
Dey prays fur ev'rything dey needs,
Dat work would bring 'em all,
An' wants de fruit of all de 'arth,
Jis' like befo' de fall.

I heard one niggah prayin', Lawd,
His very level bes',
Fur Christmas time de whole year 'roun'
An' all de time a res';
He axed to have de chicken roos'
Down on de lowes' limb,
An' turkeys jes' on top de fence,
In easy reach er him.

Come stately steppin', oh, good Lawd,
'Pon yo' lily-white steed,
An' smash dem sassy niggahs down,
An' bruise de sarpint's seed.
Dey howls at you de livelong night,
An' robs yo' of yo' sleep,
'Kase dey's too lazy fur to sow,
An' got no crap to reap.

JUBE'S OLD YALLER DOG.

I'se be'n a-trav'lin' thoo dis vale
Nigh on to eighty years,
An' now my eyes is 'gun to fail
Wid weepin' bittah tears.
My po' ole wife is gonied above—
De way I'se gwine to jog—
An' all dat's left fur me to love
Is dat ole yaller dog.

My chillun's scattered here an' thar,
An' wouldn' know me now,
But we will pass de gates ajar,
At jedgment day, I 'low,
An' while I make de 'stressful rounds
Thoo all de damp an' fog,
Of dese yar wearisome low grounds,
I'se got dat yaller dog.

We'se hunted, many a livelong night,
De 'possum an' de coon,
An' cotch 'em by de silvah light
Of many a southern moon.
We'se built a blaze an' cooked de meat
'Longside a big back-log,
An' had some times mos' monst'ous sweet—
Jis' me an' dat ole dog.

An' long as I is stayin' here
I'se got one frien', I know ;
Ef I is po' de dog don't keer—
His head don't run on show.
An' 'long as I is got a bite
Er hominy an' hog,
I'se gwine to 'vide—you jis' is right—
Wid dat ole yaller dog.

OLD CATO'S CREED.

I'se heard a monst'ous heap er talk
'Bout th'ology an' creeds,
But you hear me a'shoutin' now,
Dar's nuthin' like good deeds.
Jes' gimme sweet religion, please—
I don't keer what's its name—
De Methodis' or Babtis' kind
Will save you, jes' de same.

I'm on my road to Heaven, sho',
An' ain't got time to talk ;
Ef you is gwine 'long wid me
You's got to walk de chalk ;
Ole Pétah's standin' at de gate
An' hit am wide ajar,
But jes' a lettah f'um de church
Won't take you in thoo dar.

He gwineter ax you, mighty close,
All 'bout yo' daily walk,
An' ef you holp de neighbor po'
Wid sompen else but talk ;
He gwine to sarch you, thoo an' thoo,
An' sho' as you is bawn,
Ef you ain't right, you'll wish that Gabe
Had nevah blowed his hawn.

You'll see ole Mary shinin' dar,
An' Paul an' Silas, too,
An' Moses an' de other ones.
De ship er Zion's crew ;
An' nary one will have a creed
Ascep' de chas'enin' rod,
An' all will sing a "hallalu'"
Aroun' de throne er God.

SOME SINGIN'.

Dey talked so mighty monst'ous much
About de white folks' singin'
Up in de big high-steeple chu'ch
Hit sot my y'ears a-ringin'.
So up I goes an' tuck a seat
Jis' whar de sexton p'inted,
As 'umble dar, at Jesus' feet,
As any onann'inted.

De ban' struck up, an' I declar'
Hit nearly froze my livah,
An' almos' raised my kinky ha'r
An' made my marrer shivah.
An' when de singin' started in,
Away up in de gal'ry,
Hit sounded like a cotton-gin
A-screekin' fur a sal'ry.

Dar warn't no soun' like "hallalu!"
An' "Jerdan's stormy rivah,"
"Char-i-o' swingin' low fur you,"
As evah I could 'skivah.
Hit warn't de good, ole shoutin' songs
We has at cullud preachin',
Whar glory an' de love-feas' b'longs,
Soul-sarchin' an' heart-reachin'.

JULEY ANN.

Some say I'se cross an' cranky, too,
An' mebbe dat I am,
I'se had enough to worry thoo
To aggervate a lamb.

I'se had nine chillun in my day,
An' nary one is lef';
Dey all was tuck an' kyard away,
An' I'm here by myse'f.

Ole master died when I wuz grown,
An' stated in his will,
Dat I mus' be Miss Susie's own—
Me an' de water-mill.

My chillun, dey wuz lotted out—
An' mind you, 'fo' dey's bawn,
Fur I wuz healthy, strong and stout,
An' sho' as las' year's cawn.

De fus' wuz Tom, dey tuck him when
He jis' wuz fo' year old.
An' foll'rin' him wuz little Ben
An' den my Jane wuz sold,

An' Lu an' Bob and Tip an' Jim—
An' Sam, my crippled son,

Dey even mosied off wid him,
An' lef' me nary one.

Dem chillun's scattered ever'whar,
An' dunno who dey is,
But dey will know me ovah dar
When jedgment's sun is riz.

I may 'pear monst'ous cross an' ill,
But Heaven knows I b'ar
No spite, er hate, er 'vengeful will
To block my way up dar.



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